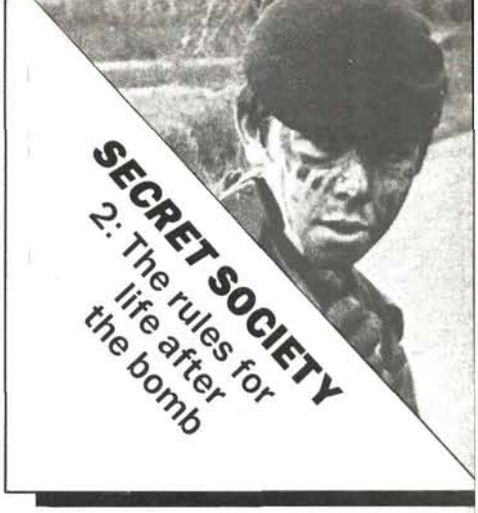
MAY 27 1987
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Display Copy

NEW
1 MAY 1987 IR£1.34 US$1.50 By Air 90p

NEW STATESMAN

- In praise of comprehensives
- Esther and incest
- The unrepentant City
- Framing Hain
- Classical revival
- Chinese literature
- Video



SECRET SOCIETY
2: The rules for life after the bomb

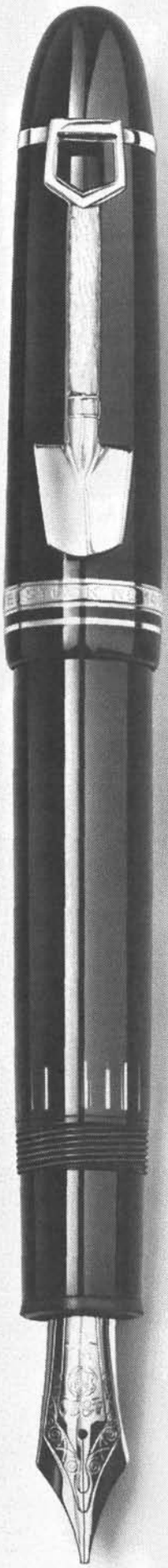
THE CRUELLEST MONTH

"We have still got to . . . tell people how our achievements have permeated the British Economy"

Margaret Thatcher

Cover illustration: 'Mac' McIntosh

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The deeper you dig the more you uncover.

THE OBSERVER ×
Choose your words carefully.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW STATESMAN

Vol 113 No 2927 1 May 1987

CONTENTS

FEATURES

Adrianne Blue: Diary 4
News: 5
Peter Kellner takes the election's temperature 6
John Rentoul: Local elections guide 7
Fred Inglis: In praise of comprehensive schools 9
Duncan Campbell: The Secret Society's emergency laws 12
Doug Jones: Three Rs of economics 14
Newstatesperson: Yasser Arafat 14
Jéan Seaton: Esther Rantzen and incest 16
Lionel Barber attacks City journalism 18
Jules Lubbock explores the cellars of the classical architecture revival 20

ARTS

Judith Williamson: *Platoon* 23
Ian Penman: Video 24
Hugo Williams: Television 25
Victoria Radin: *Sarcophagus* 25

BOOKS

W. J. F. Jenner: China's resilient authors 26
Colin Greenland: Fantasy 27
Griselda Pollock: Berthe Morisot 28
Paul Hallam: Paperbacks 29
Ann Scott: Feminist psychotherapy 30
Alan Brownjohn: Poem 30
Diana Souhami: Fiction 31

BACKCHAT

Andrew Lumsden: Out to lunch 36
Stephen Brook: Australian Chardonnay 36
Salamanca 37
Kate Pullinger: Co-operative survival 38
Weekend competition 38
Ralph Edney 39
Chess: George Botterill 39
This England 39

PLUS

Roger Woddis 4
Christian Clark: Vatican 17
Letters 32

NEXT WEEK

Realignment in British politics — the pre-electoral game played by one and all, and not just on the left: a guide to the earth-shattering changes now being prepared. *Plus* Secret Society 3: Duncan Campbell reports on the failure of British defence manufacturers to produce workable radar systems — from World War II and Nimrod to the 1990s. And our defence series returns.

Britain's Watergate

THE *INDEPENDENT* justified its name on Monday when it threw over all of its front page to detailed accounts of the central allegations in Peter Wright's book, *Spycatcher*. The former MI5 officer's allegations amount to this: that a conspiracy to subvert a democratically-elected government was hatched by a group of right-wing agents within the security services, and that, when this was reported to a senior MI5 official, the plot was covered up. It has been covered up ever since.

This could be the British version of Watergate — as Sir Maurice Oldfield, then head of MI6, is said to have remarked on hearing of it from Wright. It could be worse: Watergate's dirty tricks were aimed at discrediting an opposition party which had not been elected; the MI5 ring is accused by Wright of directing their efforts at a prime minister of a government which just had.

In the period in which this was going on, MI5 had redirected much of its effort to spying on 'subversive' groups on the British left — most of whom openly and with spectacular lack of success called for some sort of revolutionary overthrow of the government. At the same time — while, as Peter Wright says in *Spycatcher*, he and his fellows 'bugged and burgled our way across London at the state's behest, while pompous bowler-hatted civil servants in Whitehall pretended to look the other way' — 30 officers were preparing to remove Harold Wilson from office.

Note that Peter Wright is no leftist, and is only sketchily attached to the democratic process. He laments the tendency of civil servants and Post Office officials to insist on warrants for phone taps, and writes that, under Sir Michael Hanley, MI5 agents who were 'men of arms' were passed over in favour of 'men of safety'. He notes that 'I began to realise that a generation was passing. The age of heroes was being replaced by the age of mediocrity'.

Activities considered to be beyond the pale of this Wagnerian figure were clearly fairly special. The central part of the plot, as he relates it, was to leak to 'sympathetic pressmen' and 'contacts among union officials' the allegations — now nowhere taken seriously — that Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the Labour Party to 1963, had been poisoned by the KGB so that Harold Wilson, a Soviet 'asset' if not even a Soviet agent, could take his place. It was, as Wright says, 'a carbon copy of the Zinoviev letter which had done so much to destroy the first Ramsay MacDonald government'. Though Wright refused to take part in the plot when invited to do so (he says he was tempted), he also learned later than 'the boys' *had* continued in their work.

This shattering charge sheet, drawn up by a first-hand source, points to just how tyrannous the state can become if hidden from the public gaze, or at least not made accountable to ministers and to Parliament. As such, it might be a natural cause for the present government to take up. What better crusade than to throw open the doors of this fetid room, and let us see just how far the creatures in it went in the subversion of our liberties?

We knew, on the very day that the Wright material was published, that there would not be a hope of that, as the Attorney General announced his intention to prosecute the *Independent* for contempt. We had known it before, in the prosecution of the *Guardian* and the *Observer* for their earlier publication of the allegations, and in the government's continuing efforts to ban *Spycatcher* in Australia.

We at the *New Statesman* know particularly well what the government's response is in matters of this kind. The publication in January of Duncan Campbell's report on the Zircon spy satellite was followed by Special Branch raids on our offices, on Campbell's home and those of two other *NS* writers, and later on the BBC in Glasgow. An earlier attempt to publish the text of a letter from a former UK ambassador to Saudi Arabia was stopped on the grounds that its publication would be against British interests: its subsequent publication in the *Glasgow Herald* has not been seen to damage British interests one whit.

We still wait on the Director of Public Prosecution's decision on the Special Branch's report on Campbell's piece, which gave no information to a putative enemy, and which was aimed at exposing the fact that a spy satellite was being developed without any reference to Parliament. We can only expect the worst: such a project clearly is a much more potentially treasonable matter than the plot to overturn a prime minister.

The political result of the Wright revelations is this: the government approaches an election, confident of victory, with a record in the Zircon and Wright affairs which points to a contempt for accountability and for scrutiny of the evident rottenness in our security services, and a vast disregard for the rights of a free press, increasingly regarded as free only to agree with it. It has before it the allegation that an ultra-right cell within these services planned to rid the country of a Labour prime minister, and responds by taking the newspaper which printed the allegations to court.

It is one of the heaviest charges against the government and it must not be allowed to fade from sight when the people choose. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DIARY

I went up to Hereford on the 10am train to interview D.M. Thomas, the much praised, much vilified author of *The White Hotel* and other novels. As the train passed through Abergavenny, two women in the carriage began to talk. Both women were Welsh, one older than 60, the other younger than 30, the latter married to an Englishman. Her son, about nine, gazed out the window at the mountains of Wales. Smoothing his blond hair, she said, 'He's got this thing about England and Wales. Watching football. Well, he doesn't really know what side to go on, mine or my husband's.'

The older woman, a grandmother, said to the boy, in a confident tone, 'You'll play rugby for Wales, won't you.' To his mother, she said, 'There are not many young ones left.' After the mother and son got off at Cwmbran, the grandmother told me the story behind the ballad of 'Myfanwy'. The ending is romantic, but the beginning may interest *New Statesman* readers.

'Myfanwy was a little girl who lived in Cefn-Coed, Merthyr.' My travelling companion paused to spell out the Welsh proper names. 'Myfanwy was a real person. My own grandmother knew her. Myfanwy's father worked in Dowlais Steelworks where he was blinded by a blow-back, as they called it. His injuries were so horrific he wore a leather mask hooked over his ears to hide the scars on his face. There was unrest at the works after the accident, and after a time, Lord Cyafarfa, the owner, sent for Myfanwy to his castle and put a half sovereign in her hand. There had been no compensation at the time of the accident. Myfanwy, aged nine, used to guide her father to the taverns where he sang for the few coppers they lived on. He had a fine tenor voice. Now she refused the half sovereign.

'It came too late. It was charity. She was proud. The Welsh', this Welsh storyteller explained, 'remain proud, even though the English think we are 200 years behind the times. They think we're in caves, back to bear skins and clubs. I have a history and a language. I can't stand them talking down to us — "frightfully frightfully, cut glass, top drawer". I'm as good as anybody else.'

○

D. M. Thomas's gray BMW sped us to the Butchers Arms, where I ordered rabbit pie by some other name. Sensibly, he ordered sausage and chips. The afternoon was warm. We sat in the pub garden, the tape recorder between us on the slatted wooden table, drinking wine. We were in England now. I told him about the Welsh woman on the train. 'Don't say I'm Welsh,' he said. I promised I wouldn't. He is Cornish. He said a lot more, much of it very interesting. I'll tell you another time. I can reveal now that the screenplay is written, and Barbara Streisand will not be starring in the movie of *The White Hotel*.

As I waited on the platform for the train to take me back to London, a pleasant woman confided in lilting Glaswegian, apropos of nothing except the sunny day — and my unEnglish looks — that the English didn't like newcomers such as herself, they looked down on them, but after a few years when they got used to you, it is all right.

○

In London, at the National Theatre, the winching scene in *Antony and Cleopatra* made me titter. This is not what Shakespeare or the director had in mind. Antony, an old soldier with a paunch, having been made redundant by a younger general, has stabbed himself and is dying. Cleopatra, still devoted to him, but barricaded against the enemy, is holed up on the top floor of her monument. The lift had not yet been invented. To reach her, Antony must be hoisted. The apparatus the director has chosen is a kind of sling, which looks uncomfortable and likely to break under the strain. Instead of thinking of the romantic agony and ectasy of the playwright's lines, one wonders if the pulley will fail or the rope break.

Informed sources now tell me that in fact the winch did fail in one of the previews: Judy 'Cleopatra' Dench had to repeat her lines of love for dying Antony for quite some time, until extra hands to raise him up could be found behind the scenes.

○

A day at the motorcycle races at Brands Hatch. No Nortons or Triumphs anymore except in the twee historic-machine races. In racing terms, the British bike is a dinosaur, as is the American brute Harley Davidson. In the economy of speed, as in the economic markets of the world, the Japanese rule. And why not? They have built better motorcycles — sleek Hondas, Yamahas, Suzukis.

The kamikazis who pilot these racing motorcycles are Westerners — Britons, Americans, a few good Italians and Germans. Not only that, the boys ride round in circles. Motorcycle racing is a metaphor for civilised life.

There is plenty besides that wrong with the sport, but if you put politics out of mind, if you forget that the boys risk their lives for the glory of the products of corporate industry — motorcycles, petrol, oil and cigarettes are the big sponsors — it is, on a sunny day, fine spectacle. As the pack undulates round a tight bend, you can see the boys moving their arses balletically from one side of the motorcycle to the other. One in particular of the new boys, a small, squeaky-voiced Texan, just 22, threw his 750 cc Suzuki superbike around the Brands Hatch track on Good Friday with such reckless muscularity that he won two of the day's three major races. The third would have been his too but for the fact that the rider behind him, a sweet-faced, fierce Californian, bumped him from behind on the final lap. When the Californian collided with him at the 100 mph Clearways Bend within sight of the finish line, the little Texan's bike slid dangerously, there was unwanted daylight between him and the saddle, but he managed to regain control, finishing in second place. The victor got money and honour.

○

An unexpected armchair journey through the pages of *Wainwright's Coast to Coast Walk*, published with photographs only last week. Its 80-year-old author, the walkers' walker, may have another bestseller on his hands. And even those of us most devoted to poverty ought not to begrudge him success. This is the man whose previous manuscript, *A Pennine Journey*, lay in the drawer for 50 years before it was published last year with hardly a word changed.

The 190-mile, two-week, coast-to-coast walk starts at the most westerly point of northern England, St Bees Head, which juts daintily into the Irish Sea. The walk is from west to east, partly because going from left to right seems natural to Wainwright, who knows not Hebrew or Arabic, partly because the weather, including wind and rain, usually comes from the west. 'It is more comfortable to have the elements on the back and not in the face.'

Walking through the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales, the North York Moors, we end up at the stony beach of Robin Hood's Bay. Here, 'with head held high, the Coast to Coast walker completes the journey from one side of England to the other [and], to the astonishment of lounging onlookers, strides out across the beach until his boots are lapped by the North Sea.' Or hers are.

Adrianne Blue

Adrianne Blue's Book Grace Under Pressure: The Emergence of Women in Sport *will be published by Sidgwick & Jackson this autumn.*

ROGER WODDIS

Hope in a Cold Climate

Following the defeat of the centre-right government in the Icelandic general election, the balance in a new coalition will be held by the Women's Alliance, which doubled their seats and their share of the vote

It's *Skal*! to the women of Iceland
For daring to double their vote
And giving the crew under orders
A reason for rocking the boat.

The country is covered with glaciers,
The climate uncommonly cold,
But what warms the hearts of the women
Is knowing the balance they hold.

It wasn't a feminist banner,
Nor should it strike fear in the men,
If all the allegedly weaker
Should actually win now and then.

A land of two hundred-odd thousand
Can hardly be classed with our own,
But hope feeds the hearts of the doubting
And waters the seeds that are sown.

Oh, let it be hidden in Britain,
For many would count it as strange
That Reykjavik voices the passion
Of millions who cry out for change.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Putney plot

MY ARREST for a bank theft in October 1975 is remembered in legal texts as a classic case of mistaken identity. But it now seems I may have been a victim of a South African plot assisted by MI5. Eleven years after being acquitted in a two-week trial at the Old Bailey, new evidence suggests that my Kafkaesque experience was a small part of a much bigger 'hard right' project to destabilise the Labour government of the time and prepare the ground for Thatcherism.

The bank theft took place a few hundred yards from my Putney home. I was implicated when three 12-year-old schoolboys reported my car number after I had parked alongside them on a shopping trip minutes after they had chased and lost the thief. Ignoring the improbability of a thief disappearing and then returning immediately to park right alongside his erstwhile pursuers, the local police arrested and charged me.

Then a leading anti-apartheid campaigner and prominent Young Liberal, I may have seemed an obvious target for South Africa's security service, BOSS. *But I was later approached by a number of well-informed individuals alleging something even more sinister: that I had been 'fitted up' as part of an attempt to discredit leading Liberals and prevent the Party doing sufficiently well in marginal seats to deprive the Tories of a subsequent election victory.*

At the time these accounts seemed incredible. However, it now appears that the individuals approaching me were doing so on behalf of MI6, which was then locked into a power battle with MI5. It has since emerged that MI6 was also briefing the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, who astonished the House of Commons in March 1976 by alleging that South African agents were disrupting British politics; he referred specifically to my case.

A few years afterwards it was claimed by a former BOSS operative, Gordon Winter, that BOSS had activated by walkie-talkie radio a 'double' to commit the theft as I left my home. Winter also claimed security agents had tipped off Scotland Yard immediately.

In February this year, I established through a serving British intelligence officer that a record held by the British security services in London confirms that the Yard was tipped off and also that BOSS and MI5 were involved. This would explain confusing statements by detectives in the local police station made to my solicitor while I was in detention. They referred to unspecified 'additional' evidence from Scotland Yard but refused to elaborate: a great mystery to the defence team.

Recently, however, the former MI5 agent Peter Wright has revealed in his still unpublished book that there *was* a plot to undermine the 1974-1976 Wilson government — which included discrediting leading Labour and Liberal politicians. The right-wing journalist Chapman Pincher, a man with good intelligence sources, wrote: 'Certain officers, inside MI5, assisted by others who had retired from the service, were actually trying to bring down the Labour government.' Much the same account was given this year by Colin Wallace, a British intelligence officer based at Army HQ in Belfast in the early 1970s.

By the mid-1970s key sections in the British establishment had become increasingly anxious. The escalating crisis in the north of Ireland was one factor in their alarm. Another was the collapse of Edward Heath's economic policy coupled with the succession of defeats his Conservative government suffered at the hands of trade unions, notably the miners. Many on the right believed they really were faced with 'the end of civilisation' in Britain as they had known and controlled it.

Under MI5's direction, Wallace's 'psychological operations' switched to stopping the minority Labour government elected in February 1974 from consolidating its grip on power; blocking a possible Labour-Liberal coalition government from succeeding it; discrediting key Labour and Liberal figures; and removing Heath as the Tory leader to make way for a right-wing successor.

The methods recorded by Wallace were varied. Documents were forged. There were press leaks to embarrass Labour ministers. False intelligence was manufactured to influence government policies. Information was manufactured or planted to demonstrate links between terrorist groups and the Soviet Union; these links were extended to figures on the left and in the Labour Party who were presented as Communist sympathisers.

In 1974-75 there were reports of private 'citizens' armies' being prepared by retired military figures. It was not known at the time, however, that the two main groups, Colonel David Stirling's GB75 and General Sir Walter Walker's Civil Assistance, were covertly assisted by British intelligence.

From the early 1970s there was a 'hard right' project to roll back the post-war social democratic political consensus supported by all the major parties — a project which eventually succeeded with Mrs Thatcher's advent to power in 1979. This contained perfectly legitimate elements, such as the espousal of new right ideology and the open promotion of Mrs Thatcher for the Tory leadership and subsequently the premiership. But it also contained less legitimate elements such as rightist pressure groups, shadowy military networks and Peter Wright's MI5 faction.

The interests of this British hard right and the South Africans coincided. White South Africa was seen as an ally in a mutual war against 'international communism' by leaders of the Society for Individual Freedom, the National Association for Freedom and by Peter Wright's MI5 faction. Colin Wallace gives evidence that information was regularly 'traded' between MI5 and BOSS. Even joint operations were carried out where the agencies shared common objectives. The former BOSS agent Gordon Winter confirms this.

Earlier this year Wallace also showed me evidence that I was on an MI5 list of targets for 'psychological operations' in the 1970s. It is thus quite plausible that BOSS had the assistance of the rightist MI5 group in framing me on the Putney bank theft. This would have given BOSS both the 'cover' and operational back-up necessary in what is known as a 'deniable operation'.

It is salutary to note that many of the same officers active in the relevant 'F' branches of MI5 at the time are still there — although in higher positions. They are unlikely to view with equanimity Labour's commitments to redistributing power, to introducing a Freedom of Information Act and to a non-nuclear policy. At least two things are needed if the next Labour government is to avoid being undermined by its own intelligence agents: a full-scale public inquiry into the role of MI5 in the 1970s and new structures for democratic control of the security services.

Peter Hain

Peter Hain is Prospective Labour Parliamentary Candidate for Putney. His book A Putney Plot?, *was published this week by Spokesman, £5.95.*

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

Indexes to Vols 108, 109, 110, 111 and 112 are now available, price £2.50 *each* (incl. p&p). Send remittance to **New Statesman (Index), Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8BA.**

If the caption fits

No 15

There has been a welcome falling-off of the merely abusive or obscene entries in our caption contest. Home Sec Douglas Hurd, increasingly looking like a right-wing Michael Foot, may test your continence. Entries to reach us a day earlier please, Monday 11 May. The prize is still a massive £10 book token: try to make them *funny*.

No 13: winner

PC to Keith Best (still) MP: 'Routine check, Sir. The PM's "Portfolio" card's gone missing.' (*Michael Leapman, London SW8.*) Hon. mensh for: 'Can I have one of your autographs please?' (*T. McAra, Windsor.*)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PETER KELLNER

A plain voter's guide to next week's excuses

BY RIGHTS, next week's local elections should have no bearing on the date of the general election at all. Voting will take place for 12,000 seats in 369 local districts. We have local elections in order that, in theory, local electors may choose among the specific merits and manifestos of local candidates and parties. How voters swing in Poole should have no bearing on how they switch in Preston. The notion that both swing helplessly in line with a national pendulum negates the very concept of local elections concerning local issues and local candidates.

Sadly, in the real world, we must put such sentimental hogwash out of our minds. At the margin, to be sure, local concerns will bend the pendulum slightly this way or that. But overall, next Thursday's voting will be judged as if 12 million voters (assuming a turnout of 40 per cent among the 30 million electors entitled to participate) were taking part in a single nationwide dress-rehearsal for the general election.

Already Walworth Road, Conservative Central Office and a variety of competing Alliance power centres are priming their computers to translate local votes into parliamentary seats. Ward figures will be added up with cavalier disregard to the specific nature of local battles. Come Friday morning next week, the questions that will matter to the party leadership will all be national ones. What does it all mean in terms of Westminster? What differences are there among the regions? Is tactical voting taking off? Above all, *will there be a June election*?

In case there are still any hermit-dwelling purists who mock this process and insist that local elections have nothing to do with national politics, let us take a brief trip down memory lane. In 1982, the May local voting took place at the height of the Falklands war. The actions of local councillors were completely irrelevant to the conduct of the war. But throughout the country there were big swings to the Conservatives, in line with the nationwide opinion polls.

SO CAN next week's elections be analysed as if they constitute an immense opinion poll? Not quite. The tricky point about local elections is that although they tend to display national trends, those trends are not always identical to those recorded by nationwide opinion polls asking about *general* election voting intentions.

1983 was a case in point. A MORI survey for the *Sunday Times* immediately before the local elections found party support distributed: Conservative 45 per cent, Labour 30, Alliance 23. But the same poll, asking the same electors about *local* election voting intentions (where local elections were being held), found 40 per cent support for the Conservatives, 35 for Labour and 22 for the Alliance.

Could this be explained by the fact that local elections were not being held in London or Scotland? No: omitting those regions (to be more precise: omitting that city and that country) made little difference. Among respondents who lived in England and Wales, but not in London, 405 said they would vote Conservative at a general election but only 339 at the impending local election. Labour's supporters numbered 261 when asked about the general election, but rose to 302 for the local elections. The Alliance's figures were: general election 208, local 184.

The difference MORI detected between general and local voting intentions was borne out by the vote on 5 May that year. The Tories' lead over Labour was just 6 points, 9 points fewer than in the MORI (and other) general election polls.

In order to make real national sense of local voting, then, it is necessary to know how to quantify and interpret any difference between the national total of local votes and general election voting intentions. Which provides a better guide to the state of the parties: 1,500 people questioned by a pollster, or 12 million casting their votes for local councillors? Do the Tories always do worse in local elections, or does the difference vary?

> ***'If the Tories slip next Thursday, how can they be sure that they will not also slip during the bigger campaign that has still, officially, to start?'***

Sadly for politicians anxious to squeeze the maximum degree of certainty from each electoral event, but happily for those who prefer the dramas of politics to be leavened with a little suspense and uncertainty, there is no iron law that governs these matters. These are the figures for national support implied by voting in the last three years of local elections, compared with the findings of the nationwide MORI poll that immediately preceded them:

	National equivalent of local votes			MORI general election voting intentions		
	Con %	Lab %	Lib/SDP %	Con %	Lab %	Lib/SDP %
1984	38	38	22	40	39	20
1985	37	35	26	38	37	24
1986	33	37	27	34	39	25

Both sets of figures must be treated with some caution. The local voting statistics are derived from the *Economist*'s excellent annual round-up of towns and cities that vote every year; they therefore exclude London, Scotland, Wales and rural England. My 'national equivalent' figures are derived from the swings in those towns since the 1983 general election. And the MORI figures, like those of all pollsters, are subject to a margin of error.

Nevertheless, if there were any systematic differences, they should show up. The remarkable thing about the two sets of figures is not how different they are, but how similar. There seems to have been a tendency for Labour and the Tories to do slightly worse in local elections than in the late-April MORI polls, and the Alliance slightly better; but not much.

IF THIS month's MORI poll (due to be published next Sunday) shows what all other recent polls have shown, and if the pattern of the last three Mays holds good, then the Conservatives ought to do well next week — certainly better than most off-the-cuff predictions. The seats that are being contested were last fought in May 1983. Compared with the support then as *measured by local votes*, Labour is down, the Alliance is up, and the Tories are much as they were.

This would imply Tories gaining some seats from Labour but losing others to the Alliance. When their gains and losses are netted out, the Tories should emerge with their overall total broadly unchanged. If that is the story, I shall finally relinquish my position as the last pundit to predict a later rather than an earlier general election.

Two things could cause the Tories to lose more seats than they gain. The first would be a fading of the party's overall support. If the Conservatives fall below 40 per cent while Labour recovers to the mid-30s, then the outcome of next week's elections could yet cause Mrs Thatcher to hesitate before going to the country.

A more intriguing possibility is that the pattern of May 1983 may reassert itself: there could be a significant divergence between local voting and national support. The theory behind this is that the Tories' recent rise, and Labour's fall, have been due specifically to changed perceptions of the two parties' *national* leaderships. Tory councils might be seen, in general, as less strong-willed than Mrs Thatcher and her Cabinet; while Labour councils might be regarded as more capable than Mr Kinnock and his colleagues.

If that is the outcome — if the local votes imply that Labour and the Conservatives are running neck-and-neck, while the national polls show a comfortable Tory lead — what then? The immediate publicity will not help Mrs Thatcher. Friday morning headlines would then show both Labour and the Alliance gaining seats from the Tories, and a number of councils changing hands (see John Rentoul's analysis opposite). The subsequent analysis will show the Tories 'losing' many of their parliamentary seats (when the votes from individual wards are added together).

Central Office advocates of a June election might still argue that, as in 1983, the Tories will do much better than when people are choosing a government. But neither they, nor Mrs Thatcher, can be certain. For there is another difference between local votes and opinion polls. Local votes are cast as deliberate acts at the end of a campaign; pollsters ask their questions out of the blue. If the Tories slip next Thursday, how can they be sure that they will not also slip during the bigger campaign that has still, officially, to start? □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Going, going . . . soon

The local elections will fire the general election starting gun — whatever their result.* JOHN RENTOUL *reports

THE TORY party in the country is ready, even longing for an election it thinks it will win. Such is the state of readiness that an order to stand down would have a debilitating effect on party morale. Mrs Thatcher is to meet her chief lieutenants at Chequers. A major item on the agenda will be an analysis, churned out by the party's computer, of Thursday's local election results.

I'm sorry, that paragraph should have been in quotation marks. It appeared in the *Economist* on 7 May 1983. And the Thursday it refers to is Thursday 5 May, as it went to press. But it applies, with almost exact parallel, to next Thursday, 7 May 1987.

As if in the grip of history — the second time as farce, remember — Mrs Thatcher wants to call a general election on 11 or 18 June, almost regardless of the results of next week's local elections. The propaganda task for Conservative Central Office, therefore, is to present them as a triumph, whether the Tories win, lose or draw.

As a rule of thumb, the Tories should break even, the Alliance should gain 600 seats and Labour should lose a few (the 'Others' category will be further eroded, as independents continue to be replaced by party political councillors). Labour, of course, 'ought to' win several hundred to be in a position to hope to deprive the Conservatives of an overall majority in a general election, but breaking even will mean the party hasn't collapsed.

So if the Conservatives lose more council seats than they gain, they will be doing worse than they expected. But the momentum towards a June election — deliberately stoked by Mrs Thatcher in the Commons last week, talking of the electorate deciding on scroungers 'soon' — would be difficult to halt. And what matters is almost not the votes that are cast on 7 May, but how they are perceived in Friday's and Saturday's papers and news bulletins.

David Cowling, ITN's political analyst, points out that, 'as in May 1986, the actual votes will be stale almost as soon as they are cast. In terms of seats, rather than votes, the message is likely to be of significant Conservative losses and this could lead to a drop in their support.' The Tories dropped eight percentage points in the first two polls after their big losses last year.

The Conservatives won't make the same mistake this year. Two weeks ago they held a press conference to impress on journalists the fact that their May 1983 local election results — the same seats that will be contested next week — were actually very good, and that even if they do well now they will lose seats. There's some truth in this, but not as much as Central Office will try to make out (see Peter Kellner opposite).

If they lose seats at all, it will be because Tory local councils are again more unpopular than the Tory government at Westminster. It will be because the voters don't like contracting out of council services, especially of buses, or because the Alliance or Labour have begun to recover nationally.

Next week four years ago

	Con	Lab	Lib/SDP
National opinion polls			
5-8 May	47	34½	17½
Local elections			
(E&W not London) 5 May	40½	34½	22
General election			
(E&W not London) 9 June	45½	27	26½
General election			
(GB) 9 June	43½	28½	26

In a sense, then, the feeding in to the Central Office computer of the electoral runes over the weekend after 7 May is a charade. The Tories' real work is the propaganda effort beforehand, and Mrs Thatcher will spend her time at Chequers ▷

'It's worse for me — I'm in the political wilderness as well'

20% solution grinds the poor

HARDLY noticed yet is the fact that the local elections next week will be the last fought on the present system of council finance, if the Conservatives win a third term. From April next year benefit claimants will be forced to pay at least a fifth of their rates bill, no matter how poor they are.

Debate has been stifled by the lack of information the government has so far given about a scheme due to be implemented by local councils in less than 12 months' time. So far the 20 per cent minimum is only a 'proposal', but as far as can be told Supplementary Benefit (to be renamed Income Support), on which 9 million people live, will not be increased to take account of the rates contribution.

This could mean a claimant in Camden having to find £8.10 a week out of Supplementary Benefit for a single person of £30.40 a week, and an average claimant having to find over £4 a week.

The bizarre measure — not to be confused with a poll tax — combines two of the Conservatives' most characteristic obsessions: that the Labour Party dominates local government in Britain solely because poor people are allowed to vote for high rates that they don't have to pay; and that state benefits are lushly extravagant.

It will undoubtedly have an effect on local politics, although not perhaps the one the government intended. The government intends to force people on low incomes, overwhelmingly in areas that elect Labour councils, to 'take responsibility' for the spending decisions of their councillors. The poll tax, to be introduced in Scotland in 1989 if the Tories are still in power in Westminster, is designed to magnify the effect of spending decisions — a 1 per cent increase in council spending will lead to a 3 or 4 per cent increase in the poll tax.

But the difference between the rates contribution that a claimant would have to pay for a 'high-spending' Labour council and that for a 'responsible' Tory administration of the same council will be overshadowed by the sheer face-grinding oppression of claimants having to make any 'contribution' at all. And this injustice is also likely to offend many of the more fortunate floating voters not directly affected by the measure. ●

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trying to think of a better excuse for calling an election than that 'the uncertainty is holding up investment decisions', which she used last time.

'The only thing that is going to stop a June election would be the Alliance winning 1,000 seats,' says Margaret Clay, general secretary of the Association of Liberal Councillors. 'And even I'm not going to predict that.'

Tactical voting

The people who will be number-crunching in earnest on Friday 8 May will be TV 87, the tactical voting campaign. The campaign's steering committee has decided that its main aim must be to persuade local newspapers to commission opinion polls in 'too-close-to-call' constituencies in the final week of the general election campaign.

But at a meeting last weekend it decided to set up a computer model of the 'too-close-to-call' seats into which the local election results will be fed. They will be given less weight that the average of national opinion polls, but will be used to model a 'local factor' in seats where local issues and the character of local parties is likely to influence the general election result. Done with sufficient statistical subtlety — the campaign's Andy Shaw is a whizzkid with regression analyses — this provides TV 87 with the best answer to the storm of protest that arises from its use of the 1983 general election results as the basis for its campaign targeting. □

Councils to watch

There are elections in 369 councils in England and Wales next Thursday, 212 of which have the whole council up for re-election, 157 electing one-third of their seats. The Conservatives are in a majority on 131 of them, Labour 107, the Alliance 7, Others (often Tories in effect) 79 and 43 are hung. Labour expects to win control in ten councils, although it has only named three, and the Alliance has named 11 where it hopes to win a majority, and 25 Tory councils which it expects to become hung (or 'balanced').

LABOUR TARGETS	Labour needs to gain (seats)	Present control
Reading*	1	hung (Lab minority)
Trafford*	2	hung (Lab supported by Lib)
Cardiff	6	Tory

ALLIANCE TARGETS	Alliance needs to gain (seats)	
Cheltenham*	1	hung (Lib supported by Lab)
South Somerset	3	hung (Alliance-Ind coalition)
Eastleigh*	3	hung (Alliance minority)
Hastings*	3	hung (Lib supported by Con)
Congleton*	4	hung (Con minority)
St Albans*	4	hung (Alliance supported by Lab)
Southend*	4	hung (Con minority)
Ryedale	11	Independent
Liverpool*	13	Lib (temporarily)

*Indicates council polling by thirds: in Liverpool's case 59 of the 99 seats will be contested altogether, because 43 Labour councillors have been disqualified.

NEWS ON SUNDAY

This Sunday in Britain's brightest and bravest Sunday paper

BREAST CANCER
the new treatment

SCHOOL BULLYING
crisis in the playgrounds

FAME
the new religion?

DON'T MISS OUT
ORDER YOUR COPY NOW

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In praise of the comprehensive school

***Local authorities and teachers are struggling to make Britain 'the best educated society in the world.' Or should be, argues* FRED INGLIS**

LABOUR EDUCATION policy was first written by Tony Crosland, and then put into effect by him. After the great class compromise embodied in the Beveridge report, the 1944 Butler Education Act, and other such monuments so imposingly placed in the reconstruction of postwar Britain was solidly set, good socialists got to work to prevent class, the last enemy, ruining the new gardens of opportunity.

Crosland saw that the education system clearly wasn't fair and had the numbers to prove it. In *The Future of Socialism* as seen from 1956, he set out his policy. In Circular 10 of 1965 he set out to implement it. With the Donnison Commission, which reported in 1970, he intended an official instrument capable of the kindly and gradual colonisation of the public schools on behalf of those grand old political concepts, the people and the greater justice of their polity.

Comprehensive education took a surprisingly long time to get a grip on popular consciousness, not least because it *was* so direct and vivid a shock to the well-tried old class system which, however smelly and cramped, had always been good enough for those who were running things, and who damn well couldn't see why their own children shouldn't swallow the same dose.

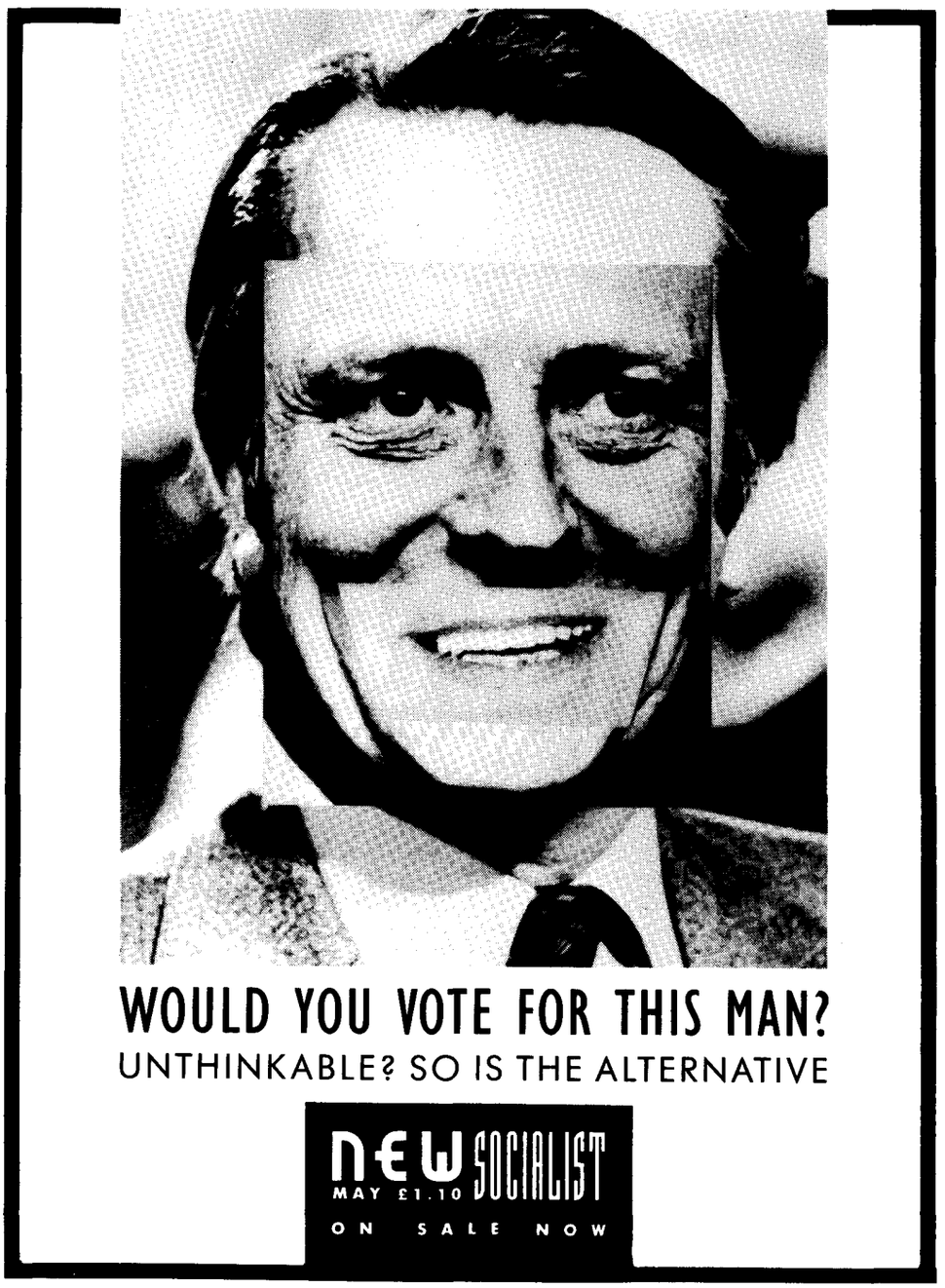
Against the dead weight of British stolidity and indifference, the quiet decencies of the comprehensive school made their 20-year advance. By 1987 the reform is still incomplete: selection grinds on in parts of Kent, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Ulster, and elsewhere, but, as local parents proved in the highly unlikely case of Solihull, people mostly do not want to go back to the terrors and cruelties of selection at eleven, of endless practice at verbal reasoning in the last two years of the primary school, of bitter fighting between those with caps and those without.

Pine-scrubbed platitudes

At a moment when teachers, having only recently completed the first angrily sustained and doggedly cohesive work-to-rule ever in their unions' history, and are now defending legal rights (not wages) by selective strikes, when schools stand shabby and unpainted, with kicked-in doors and smashed windows, when there are only a few thousand battered books and a few dozen broken motors to represent their parent culture to the school children, at such a moment it is important to declare again what a huge *success* comprehensive education has proved to be.

As never before, schools are more just, happier, freer places: the best values of British political culture have real life in them. In spite of the awfulness of bullies both old and young, on the staff or in the back row, individuals may expect to have their rights honoured, their fears cared for, and their futures, such as they are, the object of their teachers' unremitting concern and protection. When I look back at the gloomy rooms and rigid routines in which I began teaching in grammar and secondary modern schools at the start of the '60s, even the most beaten-up comprehensive of inner Birmingham or outer Middlesborough is a model of the city of reason and the gardens of the Hesperides.

And yet, these days the *Guardian* can wag a sanctimonious finger at Neil Kinnock (20 October 1986) for still so innocently 'believing that comprehensive education can still work'. For it



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has become a platitude much voiced in scrubbed pine kitchens during the leisure of the theory class that, noble as its ideals doubtless were, comprehensive education won't quite do for *their* children, as the light falls on a wintry economic afternoon.

Have standards fallen? What on earth does it mean to say that the system is really 'not working'? It is at this point that a Labour Minister-in-Waiting most needs to break with the old terms of policy and reform. Where Crosland counted on stable measures of fairness and reliable numbers to justify his institutional changes, and could do so with gestures about 'efficiency' and 'flexibility' to the technocracy, a future Labour secretary of state must just face down the self-righteous standard-bearers and good apprentices of the right. For there is simply no way of telling whether standards are going up or down. We can be sure that many more pupils take and pass public exams than did. DES statistics record a steady rise in successful exam candidates between 1975 and 1985 — from 1.46 million to 1.75 million at O level; from .33 to .43 at A level; more strikingly, from 1.89 to 3 million at CSE.

We can also be sure that vastly more pupils stay on voluntarily after the school-leaving age than was ever the case in the old secondary modern. In 1963 there were only 62,000 pupils in sixth forms in England; now there are 624,000 (taking into account their peers in FE Colleges) — 22 per cent of the 16-18 population.

On the other hand, those who announce the decline of standards have little to go on. Stirred in her class-hating bowels by the Black Papers, Mrs Thatcher set up the Bullock Commission to find such a decline and bawl it out. When it reported to the Labour Minister, Reg Prentice, in 1975 it hadn't been able to find any. Jack Wrigley, the Committee's admirable statistician, said that the base measures of, say, reading ability in 1939 were just too crude to use. If anything, reading levels had gone up. Americans, in their huge and continuing longitudinal study conducted by ETS of 600,000 pupils over 20 years, seem to have uncovered decided and measurable decline in achievement.

Of course children nowadays can rarely, for instance, calculate to the base 10 or 12 like their parents could in 1955. But neither can those parents use the computer keyboard with any of their 12-year-old's deftness and confidence. They can't use it at all. Can Kenneth Baker use a word processor? Changes in educational achievement are usually just that: *changes*. Our pupils, as we constantly urge them to do, learn different things from their parents — who often say with touching self-deprecation that they don't remotely understand, for instance, primary maths with its set and vector theory, or primary biology now centuries beyond the old nature study.

Bound to life

What is wrong with education at large goes far beyond the gates of school or the shelves of research libraries. In an immortal portion of his classic *The Challenge for the Comprehensive School* (1982), ILEA's chief inspector David Hargreaves identifies what teaching does to teachers: it makes them boring, exhausted, and hate the job. It is not so much teaching pure and simple which does these undoubtedly awful and visible things, it is teaching *now*. Teaching the present, that is, and teaching in the present.

The morbid blockages of the British present ally themselves in a condition of universal induration among nearly all our children. The only ones who escape are those reserved by great gifts or class immunity for special enclaves in the culture — astrophysics, performance music, diagnostic medicine, horticulture, ornithology. The rest in different ways refuse, as Saul Bellow has it, 'to be bound to life'. We cannot bind our children to life. At their best, they rush blithely into the casual lighthearted connections of just enough work combined with pop and party and backpacking inter-railcard. Among the black, the poor and the unemployable underclass, the cultural satisfactions are grimmer and more deadly: they are cheap drunkenness, pointless fighting or bottle smashing, the endless drift of shopping and windowshopping.

> ***'The only ground available for building the democratic city of reason and its good life is education'***

And that is the teachers' lived contradiction. They have been brought up to tell the truth and describe the world. As a class, they have been truthful and obedient, hence their promotion to senior teacher. But for some years now, they have been hired to deceive or to mitigate disappointment. Hence the work-to-rule. People need paying well to face up to such demands.

I do not think it is fanciful to describe the present conditions of teaching so. There is a blank in political debate. This society cannot go on in the social democratic dream, in which a timeless version of the lovely summer of 1959 is paraded for electoral approval. But all our social formations pretend that this *is* possible. The hard arguments are displaced from the political to the ideological realm. All teachers, from infant school to university, are then asked to carry the resulting heavy strain. Since they are members of the new class of welfare and surveillance clerks, they do so with the poor pay and lousy working conditions they share with their colleagues in the DHSS, the hospitals and the probation offices. With no open space for public argument about the ends and values we would live by, the helots of the welfare industry patch up social quarrels as best they can between the individuals concerned.

Community of learning

What merely educational policies could make this restless, unhappy polity more at ease? Any adequate answer requires a daring, resolution, and imaginative delicacy which would recover such terms from the slimy hands of the ad men and restore them to everyday political life, where they can stand up for themselves, or go under.

First, the educational leadership (starting with the Secretary of State) must restore the terms of mutual *trust*. Giles Radice intelligently proposes in his recent Fabian pamphlet the setting up of an Education Council, a nationally based and widely representative senate. This must go along with a surging effort to ask *all* teachers what they need and want in order to do their job well. Theirs is a constituency, two of whose master-symbols are creativity and independence. A Labour-led government has the political tradition to ask its people for their best, most public-spirited ideas.

Second, and familiarly, education must have what are known as resources, and may as well be called money. Paint is cheap, and schools are infrastructure. Make them look nicer, and everyone cheers up. Ignore the lying teacher-pupil ratios, as deliberately false as the unemployment totals. Hire more teachers and reduce those totals. This part is easy.

Third, forget the decline of standards argument. Instead, use standards as goals. As Radice recommends, set the Assessment of Performance Unit to measuring attainment in particular instances which then may become intelligible national ideals. At the same time, insist on education as a less instrumental and a more humanist, useful form of life, right through life.

Fourth, and in this latter connection, prepare a scheme for the comprehensive university, a university of Britain. Make Oxford and Cambridge all-graduate emporia, thus removing them from the prestige race, and shift university staff from place to place contractually, shaking them up and making them happier. This doesn't mean their blessed standards will collapse. It means that education really can continue all your life, as the extra-mural departments and the WEA have always said. You don't have to get a degree to be admitted.

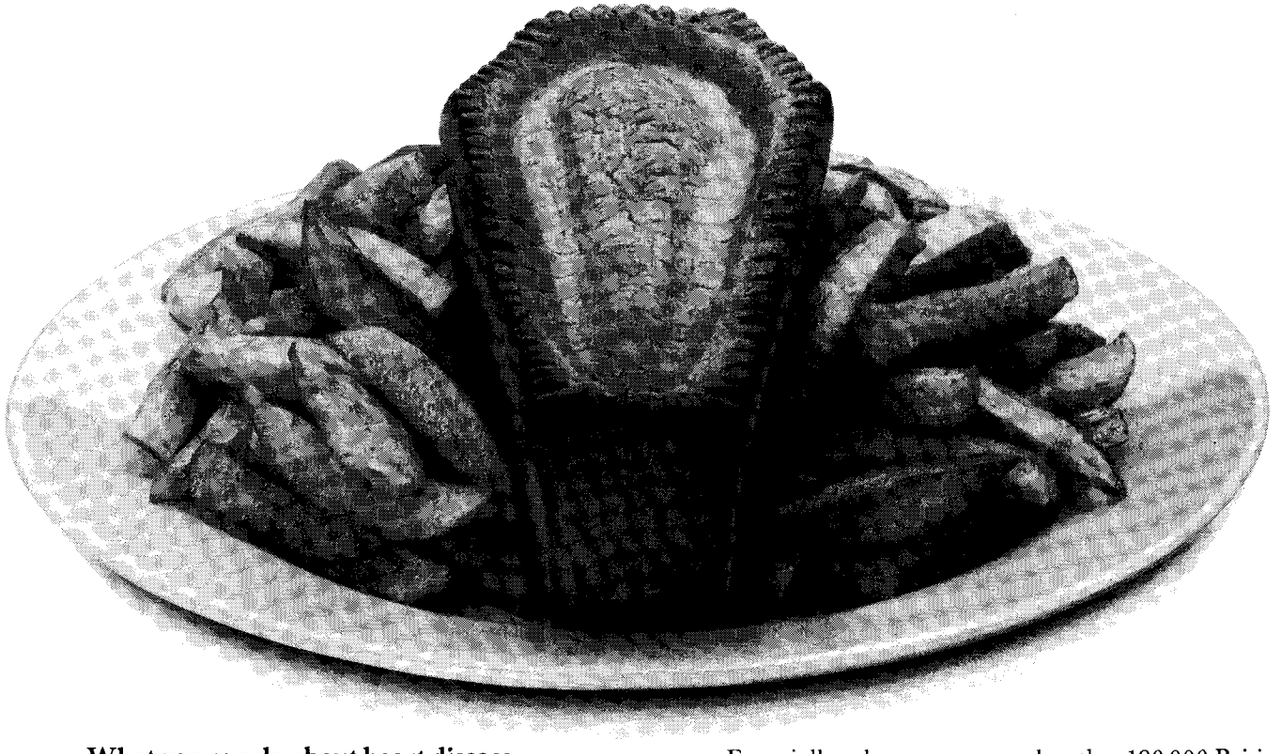
Fifth, the great effort made to restore mutual trust, honest equality, and intellectual exchange to the body of education should transpire in a common curriculum. What we have now is a mess, partly brewed in the 19th century, partly a desperate, honest attempt to train for a service economy and a workless culture. This creation would mean a new treaty with the Manpower Services Commission — and would mean giving back to the Department of Education and Science and the local education authorities the power they have allowed simply to dribble away.

All these great labours turn on socialism's great and homespun values, of equality, freedom, justice, and above all, mutuality. As I said, these values live strongly on in our schools, perhaps thriving best among their smaller members. Universities are still often poisoned by snobbery and greed, certainly as they look upon the schools which provide all their students. But the programme sketched out roughly here is intended to lead to the restoration of the community of learning. It's a phrase of which sophisticates may be shy, but so much the worse for them.

If we believe in the vision of socialism and the future it promises, the only ground available for building the democratic city of reason and its good life is education. The plain fact that it has been laid waste since 1979 is no reason for not starting again. It was Roy Jenkins, surprisingly, who said on television in March this year that the SDP wanted Britain to be the best educated society in the world. That was our line first. But plenty to build on there. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The British diet



What you can do about heart disease.

Heart disease is Britain's number one killer. It causes one in every four deaths in this country.

But, if everyone took more care, many of these deaths could be prevented.

You probably already know the dangers of smoking. Now the benefits of eating less fatty foods and finding the time for exercise are becoming clearer.

So help yourself and encourage those around you to choose a healthier way of life.

Try to eat more fish, more poultry, and trim the fat off meat. Grill rather than fry. Use vegetable oils rather than animal fats whenever possible.

And eat plenty of fresh vegetables, fruits, cereals and bread, preferably wholemeal.

Of course, it may be difficult to change the way you live. But it makes sense to try.

Especially when you remember that 180,000 British men and women died of heart disease last year.

What we are doing to help.

The British pharmaceutical industry researches, develops and manufactures vaccines and medicines.

Working closely with universities and the NHS we're part of Britain's system of health care.

Through investment in research we are striving to discover better treatments for heart disease and related conditions like high blood pressure.

But where possible prevention is best.

So if you want further advice on what you can do about heart disease write to: LAYH! Booklet, Dept. 854, 20 Clarke Rd, Bletchley MK1 1HQ.

The British Pharmaceutical Industry. Helping to keep Britain healthy. abpi

An advertisement issued by ABPI in support of the Look After Your Heart! campaign.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

2. The final curtain

In his second report in the Secret Society series, DUNCAN CAMPBELL reveals the codeword that would signal the end of civilisation in Britain

THE ULTIMATE act of the British government's secret war plans is the declaration of 'Operation Chanticlere'. Chanticlere is the signal for the evacuation of a selected handful of senior ministers and civil servants from London in the face of a probable nuclear attack on the capital. Whitehall has selected as its metaphor for imminent extinction the crowing cock of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, a cock that is seduced from its proper duty to give early warning of the dawn, so invoking the Fall — Doomsday.

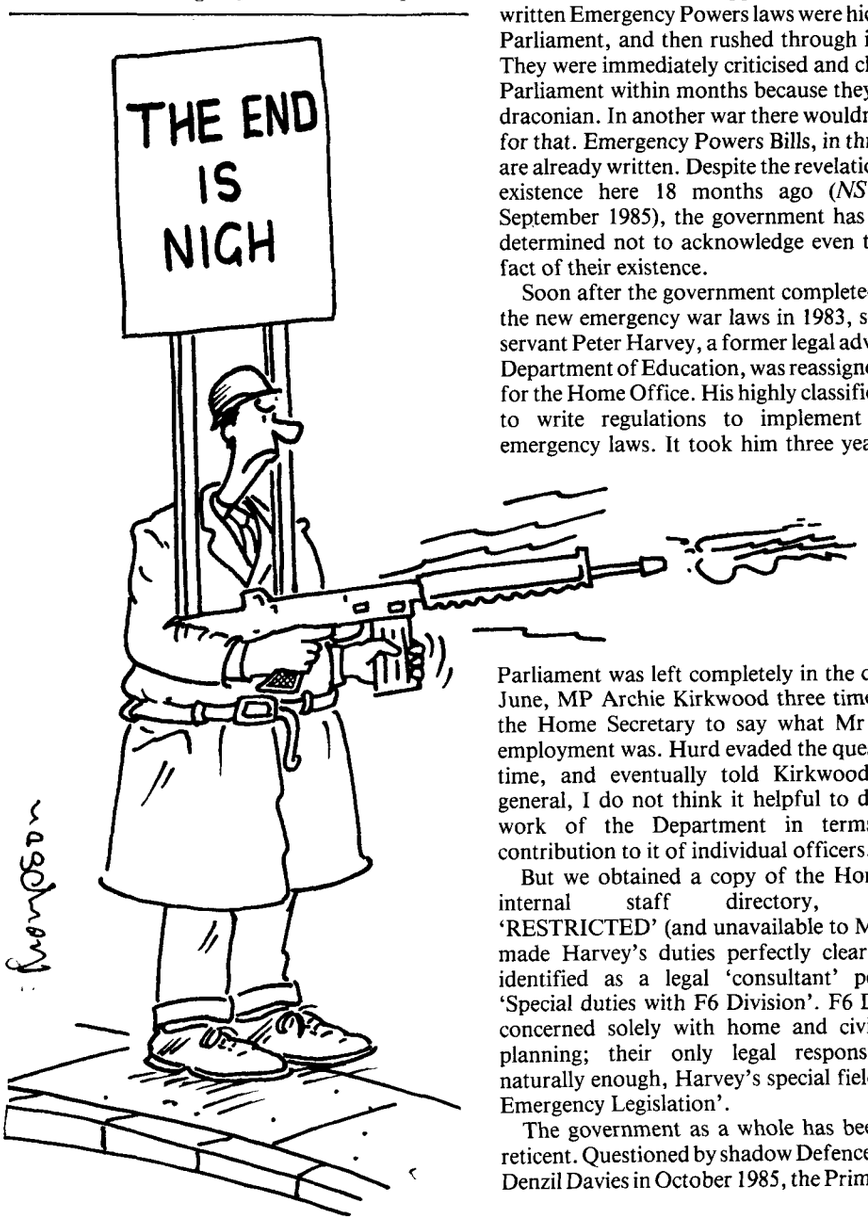
At the cry of Chanticlere, spread round Whitehall by Principal Establishment Officers, civil servants on the secret evacuation roster have to grab their briefcases and toothbrushes and rush to a convoy of waiting military buses in Horseguards Parade. About two hours' drive from London are selected and fortified citadels to accommodate those whose names the Cabinet Office has selected for nuclear survival (however temporary). The major central government citadel is at Hawthorn, near Bath; another is said to be close to Leamington Spa. Other central government staffs would evacuate to East Anglia and the Midlands.

One unlikely group that has been secretly placed on the list for survival is the Department of Transport's Shipping Policy Directorate. This group of Whitehall warriors have a crisis home in a giant concrete bunker on the outskirts of Cambridge. There, they would become the staff of NATO's Defence Shipping Agency. Theirs is an organisation which has no powers in peacetime, but which would, in war, control the operations of every civilian merchant ship of all the NATO nations. Film showing the NATO Defence Shipping Agency bunker — even though its exact location was unidentified — was cut from this week's *Secret Society* episode at the last minute, even though it had previously been approved for transmission by the BBC.

Suburban Nottingham houses another bunker for one more minor outpost of Whitehall. A giant concrete blockhouse in the east of the city would become home to part of the Department of Energy, and to many employees of the major oil companies. The Nottingham bunker is the headquarters of the NATO Wartime Oil Organisation, NWOO.

These NATO wartime civil agencies have been established for many years, and are intended to control the withdrawal or transfer of civilian resources to military use in a crisis. They are part of a broad spectrum of planning, which includes three secretly written Emergency Powers Bills, and general 'wartime host nation support' plans for visiting foreign troops.

Chanticlere is the final and most secret part of an extensive crisis emergency network now in place in Whitehall, thoroughly revised and restructured since Mrs Thatcher took office in 1979. It protects and preserves what Whitehall considers the greatest essential of British society, its 'machinery of government'; that is, themselves. But every aspect of this planning has been secret. The broad details, Whitehall concedes, would tell the Russians nothing. But they would frighten the natives, a motive for secrecy that some of the former planners themselves now suggest is improper. The former Ministry of Defence Permanent Secretary Sir Frank Cooper told me last year that he thought that many aspects of war emergency planning 'manifestly were not secret . . . I think that, in a democracy, on the whole, we should try and take the people along with us.'



The secret bills

But that wasn't what happened in 1939. Secretly written Emergency Powers laws were hidden from Parliament, and then rushed through in a crisis. They were immediately criticised and changed by Parliament within months because they were too draconian. In another war there wouldn't be time for that. Emergency Powers Bills, in three stages, are already written. Despite the revelation of their existence here 18 months ago (*NS* 6 & 13 September 1985), the government has remained determined not to acknowledge even the simple fact of their existence.

Soon after the government completed drafting the new emergency war laws in 1983, senior civil servant Peter Harvey, a former legal adviser to the Department of Education, was reassigned to work for the Home Office. His highly classified job was to write regulations to implement the new emergency laws. It took him three years — and Parliament was left completely in the dark. Last June, MP Archie Kirkwood three times pressed the Home Secretary to say what Mr Harvey's employment was. Hurd evaded the question each time, and eventually told Kirkwood that 'in general, I do not think it helpful to discuss the work of the Department in terms of the contribution to it of individual officers.'

But we obtained a copy of the Home Office internal staff directory, classified 'RESTRICTED' (and unavailable to MPs). This made Harvey's duties perfectly clear. He was identified as a legal 'consultant' performing 'Special duties with F6 Division'. F6 Division is concerned solely with home and civil defence planning; their only legal responsibility is, naturally enough, Harvey's special field — 'War Emergency Legislation'.

The government as a whole has been equally reticent. Questioned by shadow Defence Secretary Denzil Davies in October 1985, the Prime Minister

THE ANCIENT WISDOM

There is a tradition that behind all the religions and philosophies, there is a vein of persisting truths which never change. They relate to the very nature of the Cosmos, both on the vast and the minute scale. We are in and of that nature. Makes you think — Yes?

For more details write to:
The Blavatsky Trust (B)
P.O. Box 16, London W3 6HS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

refused to admit to the existence of any draft emergency laws — let alone newly written Bills. She told Davies that:

> It will be for the government and parliament of the day to determine the content and introduction of any such measures. It is not a matter which parliament need address now.

But addressing the issue now is the whole point, according to former Defence Ministry civil servant Clive Ponting — who has seen and worked on the new emergency laws and regulations. Otherwise, he pointed out, they would simply be a legal *fait accompli* in any crisis:

> Parliament is going to be under pressure to pass these Bills rapidly. The amount of discussion is going to be very limited. In effect, what's being decided now inside Whitehall is what is almost certainly going to happen.

The issue is not that War Emergency Legislation is an inappropriate or improper part of government planning, but that plans to fundamentally alter the legal system from an early stage in a crisis are being kept secret. Parliament is being lied to. Britain is almost unique in NATO in having kept its emergency laws secret. Fourteen out of 15 other NATO nations have debated such laws, and put them on the statute books.

Under the US-UK Lines of Communication Arrangement, Britain agreed to provide the US armed forces with supplies and services, including fuel and food. According to Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll, formerly the Director of Military Operations for the US European Command, the US requirements from Britain are very extensive:

> We were looking for everything that was necessary to receive materiel — ports, warehouses, supply depots, magazines, airfields; and then the ability to identify the materiel, assemble it into shipments, and to move it on into the battle zone.

Since the *NS* revelations in 1985, government ministers have now acknowledged the USUKLOC Arrangement, and admitted that it provides for food, fuel, hospitals, transport and the services of British workers to be provided to the Americans in a crisis.

Even Labour Defence Ministers were left in the dark about the implications of the USUKLOC arrangement. Roy Mason, Secretary of State for Defence between 1974 and 1976, told us that he was never informed about the agreement. His successor, Lord Mulley, was aware that an arrangement had been made, but wasn't told about plans which had been made, based on it.

According to Sir Frank Cooper, the USUKLOC plan was agreed as a result of American pressure 'for NATO countries to do more'. NATO also argued that it would 'keep some of the American senators off our backs'. Admiral Carroll agreed that the pressure was American, and resulted substantially from 'Vietnam problems':

> We had drained a great deal out of Europe. As a result, it was necessary to step up the apparent contribution of the host nations, the European members of NATO.

Special treatment

Many controversial and unattractive features of the British emergency plans were described to me by people who had worked on them, at quite different levels. A plan for controlling traffic on major roads would mean virtually sealing off civilians in cities. According to Clive Ponting and other civil service sources, roads would be effectively given to military traffic only. Former Royal Military Police Staff Sergeant Ricky Hill told me how, in the Army reserves in the 1970s, he had been extensively exercised on such home defence planning:

> I was told . . . as part of a major planning . . . that large proportions of the population would be virtually penned in.

Before an attack, he learned, there would be internment camps for dissidents, and after attack (in effect) death camps for diseased survivors. He said he was 'shocked' to be sent on exercises to practise interning British dissidents, as he'd 'never realised that that was the type of thing that the TA was going to be used for'. One type of internment camp he encountered was to hold genuine enemy saboteurs. An island off the south coast had a quite different role, where the targets were to be

> Pacifists, politicos, et cetera . . . They were people that would be singled out for special treatment.

THE USUKLOC PLANS include National Health Service hospitals which have been secretly identified and earmarked for emptying and handing over to the United States. In Scotland, *Secret Society* obtained a list of the hospitals which have secretly been included in the medical plan. They include two major, thousand-bed hospitals in Glasgow — Stobhill and Gartnavel. In a crisis, they would be taken over and used to house US Navy casualties.

The emergency planning officer for the Greater Glasgow Health Board, Dr Scott Wilson, told me that he had been given no official information about hospitals in his emergency plans being given over for US use. He said that he had heard 'vague' rumours about Stobhill hospital being handed over to the Americans. He had never even heard rumours about the second hospital, Gartnavel. (Indeed, it is suggested that this hospital was eventually turned down by the Americans as its facilities were inadequate.)

Other 'standby' hospitals are to be provided by the Americans themselves. But even at US provided hospitals, British resources will be extensively required. At Burtonwood US Army base near Warrington, Lancashire, two prefabricated, 1,000-bed mobile hospitals for the US Army are already fully stockpiled, in kits. But to put the hospital kits together, Britain has to provide, according to official US information, 182 railroad cars, 28 trailers, and 490 skilled local workers.

According to Admiral Carroll, he and his colleagues applied 'tremendous pressure' to the UK in the 1970s to get 'tens of thousands' of hospital beds allocated for US casualities. But not because wounded US soldiers would all necessarily need treatment in the UK. A major reason was a historically deep-rooted distrust by US general officers of their own casualties, whom they feared would not return to the battlefield if they were permitted to be evacuated as wounded to the US itself.

Former Health Minister Ray Whitney has admitted to Parliament that 'contingency plans for . . . National Health Service resources' do cover 'NATO military casualties'. Such plans would be 'incorporated in those for the National Health Service as a whole in time of crisis or war'. The phrase 'as a whole' is Whitehall speak — acknowledging that individual NHS regions have *not* been told that their resources are secretly to be commandeered, and would not be available to the public.

It is government fear of public alarm and discomfort, not national security, that now inhibits discussion of these sorts of plans, according to Clive Ponting:

> There is no reason why you can't discuss the principle of what's contained in the Bills without actually passing them. Then they're put away in cold storage until required.

National security wouldn't be threatened. But how any future international crisis is managed, domestically as well as internationally, is critical to survival, according to Admiral Carroll. If current military plans proceed unchallenged, he warned, war will again be as inevitable as it was in the days before World War I:

> We're going to come together at such a rate of speed, it's almost like a nuclear explosion. We're going to create a critical mass. We're not going to be able to control that mass, on both sides of the Curtain. □

man alive! *- the weekly lifestyle magazine for gay men*

MAN ALIVE! is an exciting new publishing project to produce Britain's first nationally-distributed weekly magazine for gay men. With news, features and briefings covering politics and social issues, the arts, fashion and design, leisure, travel, fiction and humour, ***MAN ALIVE!*** will reflect the self-confidence of the 1980s style-conscious gay man.

The Publishers — a consortium of gay journalists, photographers and designers, backed by a management team experienced in publishing and marketing — are seeking £200,000 to finance the launch through equity and loans. This commercial venture offers investors excellent projected returns, with possible BES relief.

If you wish to offer funding, please write for further details, indicating possible investment, to:

Louis Eaks, The Pink Press Publishing Co, 176 Ifield Road, London SW10 9AF.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ECONOMICS

Back to the three Rs

Doug Jones

REFLECTING on the 1983 election defeat, Roy Hattersley said: 'The people of Britain looked at our economic policy, admired our compassion but doubted our capacity'. The problems Labour had were intrinsic to the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES), developed in the 1970s and 1980s as a reaction to the experience of Labour in office.

But the AES failed to pay sufficient attention to a future Labour government's malign economic and political inheritance from the Thatcher government. The nature of the *economic* task has been changed by the further decline of manufacturing, the advent and subsequent fall in North Sea oil production and the increase in international economic constraints. The nature of the *political* task has been changed by the alteration of people's attitudes to public ownership, taxation, planning, borrowing and above all the role of government and markets. Together these have forced a rethinking of the options available to a government determined to tackle unemployment. Policy after 1983 not only had to be repackaged, it had to be replaced.

The complicated and unrealistic AES has been replaced by a return to basics — to the three Rs of socialist economic policy.

- Reducing unemployment
- Rebuilding industry
- Redistributing income

Each of these policies is a simple, sensible proposition that can be easily presented on the doorsteps over the next few weeks.

Labour's aim is to reduce unemployment by one million in its first two years of office. It will generate 250,000 jobs, mainly in the private sector, through an economic enterprise package based on investment and cuts in employers' national insurance. There will be a further 250,000 jobs as a result of public investment and repair in schools, hospitals, housing, transport, energy, conservation and inner city renewal. As part of the aim to provide Britain with Europe's best trained workforce, 360,000 jobs and places will be created. And in improving public services in health, education and the social services 300,000 jobs will be generated. Finally the extension of the job release scheme to men over 60 (whereby they can take early retirement if their job is taken by someone on the dole), will reduce the register by 160,000.

It is essential that Labour reverses Britain's industrial decline in order to fill the gap left in our balance of payments by the rundown of North Sea oil. Co-operation will be encouraged within industry, with legislation to give employees democratic rights to information and consultation. Incentives will be given for collective employee share ownership schemes. The network of local enterprise boards will be extended and new Regional Development Agencies established alongside a British Investment Bank and British Enterprise. Tough regulation will be introduced to get a grip on the City of London's merger mania.

The redistribution package involves increases in child benefit, pensions and benefits for the long-term unemployed, alongside independent taxation for men and women, and a statutory national minimum wage. Together the 3Rs add up to Labour's programme for national renewal. Will these policies work?

Before the last Budget an independent assessment was commissioned from the London Business School by the BBC's *Money Programme*. They concluded that Labour's target of one million off the dole was feasible with only a small increase in government borrowing, minimal adverse effect on inflation and a manageable impact on the balance of payments.

Opponents often pose the question 'where will the money come from?' as if unemployment costs the government nothing. In fact, present totals cost the Exchequer over £20bn in welfare payments and lost taxes. A one million reduction in unemployment saves £6bn. Labour will save a further £2.5bn by reversing the 2p pre-election tax cut. Labour will only have to borrow an extra £3.5bn on top of the Tories' own plans. Lay people might best understand it as being equivalent to an individual on £10,000 per year borrowing only an extra £100.

Most of the redistribution package is self-financing, through raising an extra £3.6bn p.a. from the richest 5 per cent of taxpayers and replacing the married man's allowance with other benefits and tax changes.

Other finance will come from the reallocation of resources (such as cancellation of Trident). There will also be the contingency reserves. And there will be extra revenues each year resulting from the growth of the economy. Three per cent growth yields almost £5bn each year for extra public spending or tax cuts. Labour will not promise to do all it wants at once. Indeed, apart from the jobs and anti-poverty programmes, all other policies will only be implemented as and when resources allow.

The Party's economic manifesto has to be concerned only with the steps that can and will be taken during the first term of a Labour government. It is important to emphasise this limited time horizon. Otherwise there will be the predictable criticism from some on the left, that it is concerned mainly with the problems of the capitalist economy Labour will inherit, rather than with a description of the 'New Jerusalem'.

Socialism has to be a relative concept and it has to be a dynamic concept — a set of values reflected in the way in which people try to organise change in a constantly changing society. Labour's economic policy represents a radical set of practical proposals for a society that will rapidly become more socialist than the one we have today. And to make a society more socialist than it was when the party was elected to power is surely the aim of any socialist government's economic policy. □

Doug Jones is editor of Economic Priorities for a Labour Government *(Macmillan, £7.95) and Economic Adviser to Roy Hattersley, the Shadow Chancellor.*

NEWSTATESPERSON

Arafat — back on top

'IF UNITY is seen as a compromise, then compromise is one of my sacred achievements' — Yasser Arafat, the newly re-elected chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, summing up his success in uniting his ranks at the 18th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC), which ended in Algiers at the weekend.

Arafat's mix of subtle manoeuvring and delicate phrase-mongering bought back into the PLO fold the largest of the dissident factions including the Popular Front (PFLP) led by George Habash, and the Democratic Front (DFLP) led by Nayef Hawatmeh, both of which boycotted the session in 1984 to forge links with Syria.

Arafat's nom de guerre is Abu Amar; Amar, from the Arabic 'to build', neatly reflects his ability to dismantle and rebuild alliances. His central diplomatic skill is to make small concessions appear mammoth.

A favourite Palestinian joke relates that when he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and was obliged to take part in the ritual stoning of Satan, Arafat slipped the stones to his bodyguards saying: 'You do it for me. I like to keep my options open — even with the Devil.'

His special brand of pragmatism has given birth to a separate school of thought in the Arab world, known as 'Arafatism'.

In Algiers, for example, he secured PFLP and DFLP support by agreeing to scrap an accord with King Hussein of Jordan which Hussein had anyway neutered a year ago. After a week of intense haggling, Arafat agreed to cut links with the Egyptian government, unless it renounced the Camp David agreement with Israel — but the final resolution was couched in such ambiguous terms that the back door is left ajar for discreet talks.

Arafat has survived numerous attempts on his life, including the Israeli bombing of his Tunisian headquarters in October 1985. He puts this good fortune down to his 'nose for danger'. He was in his element in Algiers, the rapturous applause which greeted his arrival each day at the conference centre testifying to his popularity after 20 years at the top. Fondly referred to as 'the old man' by Palestinians, he is actually only 58. The seasoned fighter looks every inch the part in his black and white kuffiyah, khaki uniform complete with pistol, and a three-day growth of beard.

He revels in the cut and thrust of public debate, being adept at putting his opponents on the spot. He is a natural orator, much given to emotional gestures and dramatic exits in order to secure his demands. He always manages to rise to the occasion: last Thursday night, at a dinner given by the Palestinian Women's Organisation for women delegates and journalists, he pledged that the first president of Palestine would be a woman. This sent his inner circle into a flutter — who did he have in mind?

The quality which most endears him to his supporters is his sense of humour. The same evening he remarked to a group of British reporters, after an interview in which they had not managed to extract one new piece of information, that after independence he would work for a television channel as he could do the job 'much better than they could'.

Colleen Johnson

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On guard.

The stance we're taking is to generate interest in Britain's ancient woodlands, because they're under threat.

The New Forest, Windsor Great Park and the Caledonian Pine woods are prime examples of ancient wood pastures, but the most traditional form of ancient woods is what you see here.

The coppice.

Woodland thrived in medieval times, but since 1945 10% of the remaining 500,000 ha. of ancient woodland has been cut down.

The Nature Conservancy Council believes that destruction for any purpose must now stop, and our ancient woods should be properly managed. Indeed, the NCC has gone so far as to list all ancient woods, county by county, to provide a national inventory.

In support, Esso has joined with the NCC to launch the Ancient Woodlands Project.

Our sponsorship is enabling the NCC to produce a series of illustrated regional books designed to encourage interest in local woodlands – describing their history, uses and wildlife, with lists of woods to visit.

A further national volume will incorporate a management handbook for professional foresters and weekend conservationists alike. Guidance will be given on what should and should not be done with ancient woods.

You may like to know that the NCC's inventory has already been accepted as part of the Forestry Commission's Broadleaves Policy. Good news, indeed. In this European Year of the Environment, however, we urge you to be 'on guard.'

Esso

Quality at work for Britain.

A MEMBER OF THE EXXON GROUP

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Odious to the conscience of the country

Esther Rantzen's Childline programme revealed a vast hidden ocean of child sexual abuse and suffering — or did it? And did it do anything to remedy it? As Esther bows out of the Childline chair,

JEAN SEATON ***analyses the effect***

EARLIER this month, Esther Rantzen confessed to *Woman's Own* that her work in 'discovering' child sexual abuse on a vast and hitherto unimagined scale would be dramatically reduced. Since November of last year, 'Childline' has caught the headlines and the consciences of millions: now, says Esther, 'I've become so stretched that my husband has set up what he calls a Spouseline . . . (it) . . . means ringing me up in the car as it's the only way we can communicate with each other.'

What have been the effects — and what was the significance — of Rantzen's celebrated Childline programme, which encouraged young viewers to phone in if they were suffering abuse? With the immediate excitement now subsided, it may be possible to consider whether all the prime-time television and pop-press coverage, as well as expenditure of public money, achieved anything at all.

The question is one which is now (perhaps belatedly) receiving official attention: a working party just set up by the Home Office to consider the role of publicity in the prevention of child abuse and molestation (chaired by Michelle Elliot, American director of Kidscape) focuses on an area in which double standards are all too apparent. At the same time, the Childline case has implications for the use of television as a public-service weapon against other kinds of bad personal behaviour ('unsafe sex' for instance).

A sort of dry-run for Aids Week, the Childline programme presented by the *That's Life* team (BBC1) deliberately set out to alarm and shock. It succeeded, at least in the eyes of the media, which were immediately as one in their heartfelt concern about a matter of burning national importance. They were also united in their editorial judgement that the issue required detailed and prominent treatment. Esther, whose own family life had long belonged to the public domain, was news in herself. Esther linked to anything so intrinsically marketable as wicked step-fathers, innocent kiddies and taboo sex, required very special attention. For a while, Esther's harrowed countenance and expressions of dismay took precedence over royalty. It came as no surprise when, in February, her efforts were rewarded with a prize. Many were disappointed that she had not been made a dame.

Any child's hazard

Yet we should not make too much fun of Esther. There *is* a problem. Out there among the people with television sets, there exists a widespread syndrome so disturbing that it has generally been ignored, and Esther is not to be blamed for talking publicly about it. What is of interest is not, primarily, the sensationalism of the *That's Life* approach (we will return to that later) but the underlying assumptions. For the Esther campaign continued a critically important shift of emphasis. In the past, incest (especially incest involving children) had been seen as a lurking threat to the ideal of nuclear-family life. *On the Esther show, new currents of opinion were allowed to exert their influence, and child sexual abuse was suddenly transformed into the occupational hazard of any young child (especially female child) living in a family.*

What made the banner headlines was the sheer number of calls in response of Esther's appeal to children in difficulties. This direct feedback seemed to confirm *That's Life*'s own, independently conducted, market research. The result of the latter (one million 'abused' children) indicated such a widespread occurrence that what had appeared as highly exceptional and deviant began to look uncomfortably close to a pattern of normal behaviour. Was there, perhaps, an abused child in every classroom, an abuser living in every street?

Reliable statistics in this field have never been easy to obtain. On closer examination, however, Esther's shock figures do not necessarily show anything very new at all. In the first place, there was little attempt to distinguish properly between sexual and non-sexual 'abuse', to define at all closely the concept of 'abuse', or to consider the problems of degree and frequency. In the second place, there was the question of the reliability of answers in an area not quite as straightforward as asking how people might vote if there was an election tomorrow. In the third place, not only does much clinical evidence suggest that, if anything, child sexual abuse has tended to diminish, but also that there is strong historical evidence that a few generations ago the incidence was dramatically worse.

There can be no doubt that sexual abuse was common. The London branch of the NSPCC observed in 1880 that 'sexual assaults on children are strangely widespread, and although odious to the conscience of the country . . . almost unpunishable.' In the same year, 69 cases of 'immorality' involving children were recorded in Liverpool alone. But one difficulty was in knowing how to treat the notoriously unreliable evidence of victims. As is well known, Freud at first believed, but later came to disbelieve, female patients on the subject of their own early sexual experiences. Some modern analysts have wondered whether Freud's original assessment may have been the correct one. Similarly, it has only been in the last few years that a sexual abuse syndrome, analogous to the battered baby syndrome, has received wide acceptance.

One explanation of the delay is the 'last taboo' theory: every other taboo surrounding the discussion of sexual deviance had to be demolished before this particularly unsettling one could be properly explored. An explanation of the sudden, heightened awareness of child sexual abuse may, however, have more to do with politics: in particular the influence of the women's movement.

A new puritanism

In recent years, a new school of feminist writing (Laura Lederer's early collection of essays, Alice Munroe and Connie Guberman's more recent work are the most notable examples in this area in the 1980s) has been increasingly critical both of conventional sexual attitudes and, most dramatically, of the institution of the family. Where previous discussion of problems of child welfare had idealised family life as a souce of love and security, the 'new' feminists maintained a distance. For them, the family was to be seen not as a source of care or fulfilment, but of terror and private oppression in which erotic power played a major part. The theorists of what became a new puritanism focused on the home as a place where child-women are supposedly degraded, devalued, and actually or metaphorically raped. Whereas for many feminists the gender problem remained one of socially-imposed roles, for an influential group the root cause of female subjugation presented itself in the form of the rapacious patriarchal beast.

WHY IS MAY DAY 1987 GOOD NEWS FOR THE LABOUR PARTY?

From 1 May CLPs can benefit from quality printing at *down-to-earth* prices.

Our special rates for the **Labour Party** reflect a substantial discount (45%) on our commercial rates e.g.

2,000 A4: *one side* £29.50
2,000 A4: *two side* £37
2,000 A5: *one side* £20.50
2,000 A5: *two side* £26.50

All plus VAT. Camera-ready artwork supplied.

Typesetting per page: A3 £15, A4 £10, A5 £5. For quantity runs and election material please phone us for individual quotations:

PROMPT PRINTERS (WEMBLEY) LIMITED
WEST END OFFICE 01-323 3232

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The new philosophy has undoubtedly begun to affect socio-psychological thought on child abuse, and its influence on the Esther show — scarcely the most obvious vehicle for radical ideologies — was ironically apparent. Shorn of the political feminism, continuing to uphold the familial ideal, the Esther team willingly embraced the theory of male corruption. Dramatically, before a peak audience, the implicit message was purveyed that sexual abuse is a potential threat at every domestic hearth, that within every respectable paterfamilias a lustful monster lurks. (Esther talked in one interview of the children who had 'two daddies, "nice" daddy and "devil" daddy'.) The core idea was that sexual abuse by fathers or step-fathers is the terrifying symbol of a general social disorder.

Would that it were so simple. If, in any given situation, one family member is the 'cause', the obvious remedy is to remove him. Real-life disturbed families, however, seldom have single 'culprits'. In families where child sex abuse occurs, it is common to find *every* family member collusively involved. In such cases, the notions of 'guilt' and 'innocence' are devoid of meaning. Making the parents accept responsibility for what has happened is an important precondition for treatment. But, as Kempe has argued, where fathers are sexually exploiting daughters, mothers are almost always as locked into the arrangement as the fathers who commit the physical act. Sexual abuse in this view remains a feminist issue, one of social and familial power: not one of identifying 'beasts.'

The 'common sense' solution, given encouragement by some of the new feminist ideas and a populist boost by Esther, is to imprison the father, put the daughter in care, and leave the mother looking after the other children. Such a remedy is crucially dependent on the allocation of blame: its consequence, however, may be to cause the maximum damage to the victim, whose self-reproach will be enhanced by the anger of other members of the disrupted family. Typically, parents in such cases unite emotionally to scapegoat the allegedly 'seductive' daughter. Meanwhile, the child experiences its 'rescue' as punishment. What appears to the outsider as the necessary removal of a child at risk from a bad environment may appear to the child on the inside as the loss of the only real relationships it knows. 'Home' need not be sweet to exert its pull. Love and dependence can exist alongside hate and repulsion — and none of these emotions may be one-sided.

To be fair to the new feminist theorists, the patriarchal beast in their writings is a complicated animal. Sometimes he takes physical form, but often he is merely a philosophical construct. Popularised, however, he has a sort of primaeval simplicity: a dragon in our midst. All the more dangerous for the disguise of respectability he often wears. No wonder that the Esther show (and the mass press) should so eagerly have adopted him. For the beast, the bogey man, has become the perfect peg on which to hang up-dated, post-permissive prurience.

> ***What is interesting is not the sensationalism of the That's Life approach, but the underlying assumptions. In the past incest had been seen as a lurking threat to the ideal of nuclear-family life. On the Esther show, child sexual abuse was suddenly transformed into the occupational hazard of any young child (especially female child) living in a family***

The miasma of need

It should be obvious that sex is too odd and difficult an area for a media campaign to be the appropriate means to stimulate change. Problems involving families require slow, painstaking attention, not showbiz razzamatazz. In television, time means money — which explains the breakneck speed with which the *That's Life* campaign was launched. There could certainly be no other excuse for the hurry: unlike Aids or drugs, incest is not a new problem or one that has become rapidly worse.

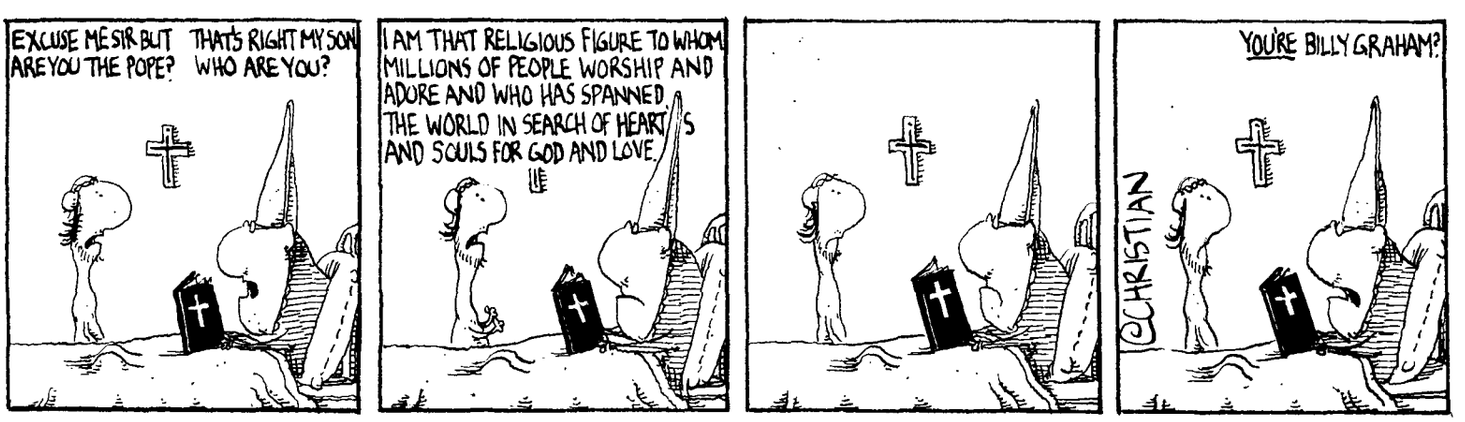
Lack of adequate preparation was the accusation levelled at *That's Life* by two low-profile bodies run by people who are themselves ex-victims, and from which the Esther show borrowed ideas: Incest Crisis Line and Childwatch. Both warned that the BBC service would be unable to deal with the number of telephone calls it would receive. They were right: so many children tried to ring that the lines jammed, and instead of talking to a counsellor many callers found (and continued to find) themselves being told by a recorded voice where to send their donations. 'The whole concept of Childline and how it has been conducted horrifies me', says Dianne Core of Childwatch. 'I don't think I'm exaggerating in saying that it has put the child at even greater risk.'

In its own terms, the Childline programme appeared to be a success: if children were unable to get through, so it was argued, that at least indicated the extent of the need. Yet was the 'need' really a miasma? The sheer weight of calls was staggering and, to those who took them, evidently distressing. But as the huge majority even of those that were properly answered were anonymous, follow up was usually impossible. (By contrast, nine tenths of callers to the well-established Incest Crisis and Childwatch telephone services give their names.)

The experience of expert social workers is that cries for help have to be dealt with quickly, carefully and thoroughly over a period of time. A proper back-up service was something Childline was simply unable to provide: initially, it referred callers to a hastily-assembled team of social workers who soon quarrelled with Esther and left. Thereupon Childline turned to partially trained volunteers.

'All the news that's fit to print' is an ancient media adage, and television has steadily extended the limits of the publishable. Paradoxically, the new puritanism has not made discussion of difficult topics harder — it has merely altered the reasons for discussing them. Prurience and censoriousness have rolled back the boundaries, exposing territory that the old permissiveness never reached. Shock and pleasure are intimately related zones: did the huge viewing figures for the Esther show reflect an earnest public desire to be better informed, or a less-than-savoury willingness to be entertained?

That's Life would have done best to have stuck to highlighting services that already exist and know what they are doing. That way, the world of unhappy families can be dealt with by humane people with modest aims who have no interest in causing a sensation. What is needed, in the words of Patricia Beezley-Mrazek, a leading authority on child abuse, is a 'non-punitive climate in order that parents who suspect or who are involved in sexual abuse come forward without fear that family breakdown and incarceration of the abusers are inevitable'. Neither prize-winning Esther, nor those feminists who invented and propagated the patriarchal monster, have done much to advance this cause. □


EXCUSE ME SIR BUT ARE YOU THE POPE?
THAT'S RIGHT MY SON WHO ARE YOU?
I AM THAT RELIGIOUS FIGURE TO WHOM MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WORSHIP AND ADORE AND WHO HAS SPANNED THE WORLD IN SEARCH OF HEARTS AND SOULS FOR GOD AND LOVE.
YOU'RE BILLY GRAHAM?
CHRISTIAN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MEDIA

Making friends with fun financiers

Lionel Barber

IT WAS Mr Ivan Fallon, the current deputy editor of the *Sunday Times*, who gave me my first instructions in financial journalism. 'Forget all this investigative stuff,' he declared, 'just get to know a small number of successful businessmen. Make friends with them. Take them out to dinner. Get invited to their homes — you'll find some of them like Tiny Rowland are really great fun to be with.'

Mr Fallon is a successful financial journalist. He is the co-author of a widely acclaimed book on the DeLorean scandal and is a former City editor of the *Sunday Telegraph* where he penned a readable and informed column, a formula he is now repeating at the *Sunday Times*. He was also one of the financial journalists closest to Mr Ernest Saunders, the disgraced former Guinness boss.

News editors still find something to commend about the Fallon model of financial reporting. It ensures a steady stream of scoops about the 'movers and shakers' inside the British corporate establishment. It gives the City of London what it wants: an inside track on the next blockbuster takeover bid or the latest gossip on a company's profits and likely share price rise.

But there was a time when financial journalists were more than news receptacles for a select group of business millionaires. Fifteen years ago, Charles Raw and other journalists at the *Sunday Times* were burrowing into the empires of Robert Maxwell and Jim Slater, helping to shape not just public opinion but also, through their revelations, the judgement of the City's regulatory authorities.

These were heady times for the journalists involved, even if the readers sometimes had a hard time of it. Several thousand words of copy, exploring each intricate financial ploy, is not guaranteed to win a wide audience. Today, much of the writing in the financial pages of the press is crisper, punchier, if more sensational; the trouble is that it looks a good deal more superficial and less critical.

The Guinness affair is surely a case in point. Blame for the scandal has already been liberally distributed among various institutions and individuals, but little mention has been made of the collective culpability of British financial journalism.

That may seem a harsh judgement: it was fearsomely difficult to track Guinness's secret share manipulation operation. To support it, two observations can be made. First, the sheer size of the operation and the number of people involved should have left sufficient leads for an alert and critically-minded group of journalists.

Second, observers *did* know what a furious effort was being made to push up the Guinness share price in the final weeks of the bid (the evidence was in the share price itself), but despite the realisation that there is a very thin line between legal and illegal price manipulation there was no serious attempt to investigate, even by those Sunday papers that had the time and resources. The financial press was either too blasé ('everyone's at it, you can't stop it') or over-impressed by Mr Saunders. (It is noticeable, too, that it was the poorly funded Labour Research organisation, rather than anyone from the financial press, which took the trouble to sift through the several million names on the BT share register to come up with the many variants of the name of Mr Keith Best MP.)

THERE HAS always been a tendency to lionise businessmen in the financial pages of the national press. Today it is more marked than ever: such adulation has no doubt contributed to the belief of several business leaders that they are above the law. This tradition of sycophancy may reflect the political climate; it is nonetheless extremely unhealthy. The past two years have seen takeover activity on an unprecedented scale in the UK. Yet far too many questions have been left unanswered about the effects of these takeovers. To my knowledge, there has been only one hard look in the press at the most voracious predator of them all: Hanson Trust, the hamburgers to bricks conglomerate which has been swallowing up companies on both sides of the Atlantic.

> ***'During bids, journalists' judgements are swept away by the sheer hyperbole surrounding the billion dollar deals'***

During bids, journalists' judgements are swept away by the sheer hyperbole surrounding the billion dollar deals. They focus instead on personalities, resorting to clichéd descriptions of the major corporate players: 'the charismatic Ernest Saunders', 'the suave Ralph Halpern' (the Burton chairman who grabbed Debenhams), and the 'ruthless Lord Hanson', boss of Hanson Trust.

It is true that many of these characters *do* shape their companies according to their own image. But it is also fair to say that there are other players who are equally important and yet escape scrutiny. Guinness scandal apart, rarely is the public allowed to penetrate to the real deal-makers, such as the merchant banks who have been queuing up outside British companies offering long lists of bid targets. Nor is the general reader, through the press, plugged into the people whose buying and selling can determine the fate of companies during a takeover bid: the pension fund or insurance managers who manage billions of pounds of funds through their shareholdings in public companies.

THE REASONS for these gaps in the reporting of matters financial are diverse. One straightforward explanation is that journalists are simply not trained to do the job properly. They have little or no experience of working, say, in the City of London; they are unfamiliar with accountancy, one of the key tools in prising open a financial story; and they often come (my own example included) with an arts background with no knowledge of economics.

They can also be extremely lazy. On my first newspaper, I recall a senior financial reporter explaining to me that the only way to get to grips with a big business news story was a long lunch, followed by 20 minutes on the Space Invaders machine in the pub. Yet a financial reporter worth a front-page lead will be struck by the sheer quantity of information flowing in not by the hour, but by the minute. The speed at which most journalists are required to work reflects the frenetic activity within the stock market itself.

Special pleading? Not really, because the City and the corporate world is already adjusting to this new high-speed reality. Far more sophisticated methods are now being used to get journalists 'on-side', the most obvious development being the rapid growth of public relations consultancies — advising companies, banks, lawyers and accountants on how to get the right image and message across to the public through the media.

Last year, more than £540m was spent by companies on all aspects of public relations. Fee income shared among PR firms in the UK grew by 22 per cent in 1985, topping £50 for the first time.

In many ways, their influence is more negative than positive. By bombarding journalists with telephone calls and press releases, they consume the most precious commodity the financial reporter possesses: time. More important, they seek to dictate the agenda, locking reporters into briefings, press conferences and lunches which yield little of substance compared to, say, a quiet half-hour's perusal through a company's annual accounts.

Because journalists learn on the job, they rarely tap these primary sources. Instead, they rely on the self-estimation of the company/individual to an extent that would be unthinkable in political or labour journalism; or, little better, on secondary sources such as PR companies and stockbroking analysts (who usually have an axe to grind).

More worrying for those interested in seeing accurate and objective stories in the press is the way in which much financial information is imparted. This might loosely by described as 'the City lobby system', and it bears some resemblance to its pernicious counterpart at Westminster and Downing Street.

Most financial reporters are struck by the difficulty in extracting quality information from those in the know, whether they be government officials, stockbrokers, fund managers, merchant bankers or the top businessmen themselves. In almost all cases involving anything mildly controversial, these people decline to go 'on the record' or to be publicly quoted. The conventional defence is that such information is 'market sensitive', ie that share prices could move as a result of something being published, allowing people to make a quick buck if they have inside knowledge of what is about to be printed.

The fact that, on numerous occasions this year, shares have moved sharply following (often speculative) news reports suggests two things: first, that the City, like Mr Bernard Ingham, is well clued up as to the benefits of talking to the press; second, that financial journalists are far too willing to trade anonymity in exchange for titbits of information. □

Lionel Barber, a former City reporter for the Sunday Times *and the* Financial Times *is now the* FT*'s Washington correspondent.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NO WONDER THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT FEEL THEIR ECONOMY WOULD COLLAPSE WITHOUT APARTHEID.

White South Africans have one of the highest standards of living in the world. But while their prosperity is dependent on black labour, the black population is forced to live in poverty. If you'd like to see an end to this inequality in South Africa please cut out the coupon. We know we can't change the system overnight but every signature we get helps those who suffer from it the most.

Please send this coupon to; WOW FREEPOST, 37-39 Great Guildford Street, London SE1 0EW.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

IF YOU'RE ON OUR SIDE, SAY SO. NT6

WAR ON WANT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ESSAY

Politics of the portico

The Prince of Wales, famous for sneering at architectural carbuncles, was altogether more enthusiastic about last month's Real Architecture show at London's Building Centre. And what, you might ask, is 'real' architecture? Why, it's that darling of the New Right: a revival of classicism.* JULES LUBBOCK *explores the politics hidden behind the aesthetic facade

THE NEW RIGHT, so called, is campaigning for a complete revival of classical architecture. Those involved include Roger Scruton (inevitably) and the Peterhouse architectural historian Dr David Watkin, whose recently published *History of Western Architecture** furthers their ambition by re-evaluating the entire history of architecture in terms of classicism.

Their case is not just that modern architecture is awful to live in and to look at, but that it developed from erroneous theories and architectural fallacies. Among these are the Ethical Fallacy, by which buildings are justified morally rather than aesthetically, and the Romantic Fallacy, by which they are valued for associations rather than intrinsically as architecture.

In pursuit of the Ethical Fallacy, modern architecture was driven to display its construction and materials honestly, without the disguise of facades; planning reflected functions, not formal symmetries. The Romantic Fallacy led the architect, in addressing collective social needs, to suppress his or her individualistic, bourgeois taste. The essence of pure architecture — habitable and beautiful surroundings — was sacrificed to the supposed moral value of these barren and unornamented buildings, which fared no better as social engineering. But classical architecture, the argument continues, was value-free, and was enriched by individualistic and idiosyncratic geniuses, such as Michelangelo and Lutyens, with whose buildings, apparently, 'the public wishes to identify'. (Readers detecting a whiff of Ethical Fallacy in that last phrase should temporarily suspend their disbelief.)

This is no rarified, academic argument. Before television, monumental architecture — from the Pyramids to the Nuremberg Stadium — was the major form of state propaganda. Architecture is still important: as the visible product of social and economic organisation, giving shape and significance to the ownership of land, buildings are emblems of ideology and, hence, a focus of political debate.

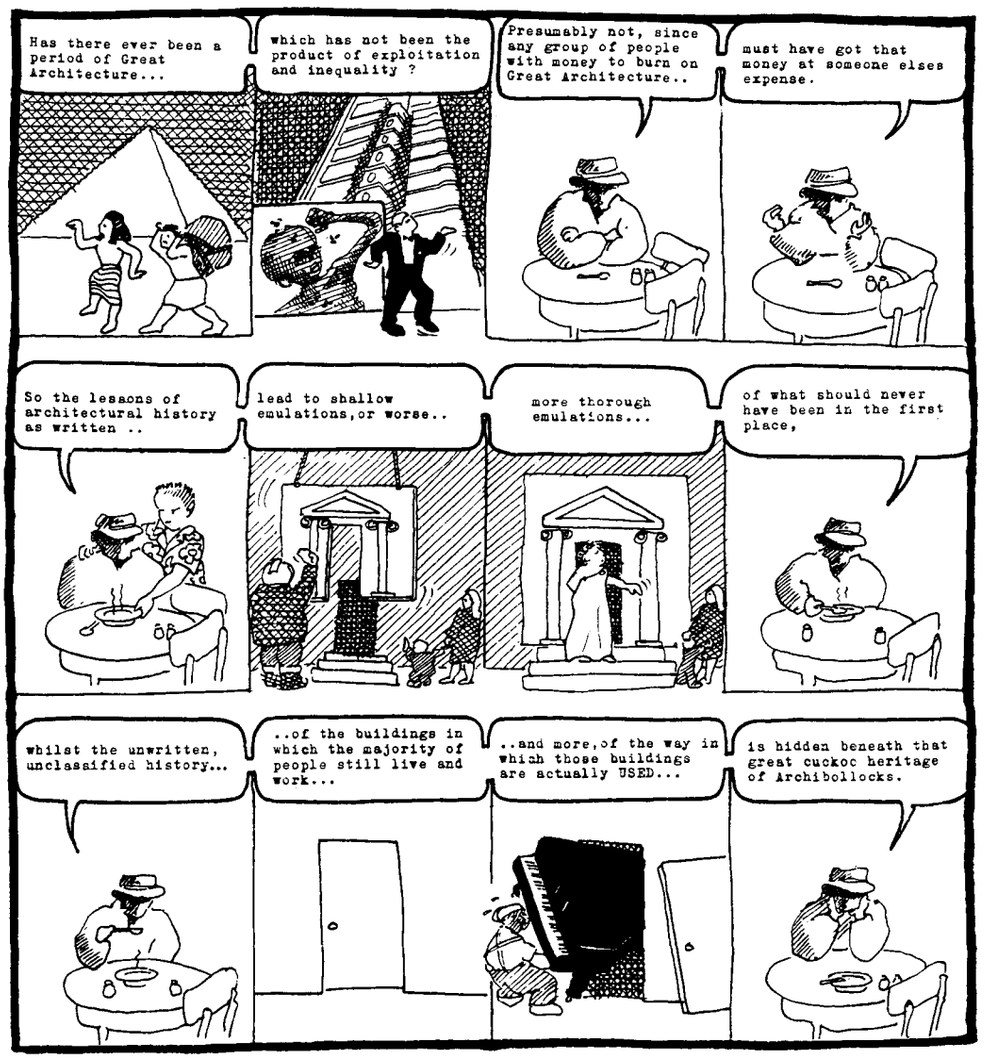
But it is a debate that can be couched in veiled, aesthetic statements, evading the stringencies of ordinary political and economic argument. Insinuate that socialism was to blame for decanting the cosy communities of Coronation Street into high-rise flats, whether true or false; claim that the Tories believe in a house and garden for all: you have a highly effective and hard to dismantle political symbol.

David Watkin's earlier book *Morality and Architecture* charged that modern architecture and socialism were identical. The left's response was to tie itself in knots searching for a 'proper left analysis' — which often meant a blustering defence of modern architecture simply because it had been attacked as socialist. No one stopped to think whether the charge was true: it seemed all too true. In these very pages (*NS* 23.1.87) Frances Morrell repeated the accusation — 'Labour councillors, intent on meeting housing targets . . . introduced without debate in the party "The Corbusian epoch of the New Brutalism"' — and every Labour MP who has spoken on the High-Rise Disaster in the present House of Commons, except Tony Banks and Alf Dubs, has taken the same line.

If the left has baulked at a classical revival, it's been for the wrong reasons: it was 'unrealistic', 'nostalgic', the very image of a Britain 'living in an old country'. But what was there to offer in its place? Some finer, more popular modern architecture, like Richard Rogers' Beaubourg Centre? Community Architecture?

Then came Designer Socialism. Poor Mr Kinnock doesn't exactly look the part but, that aside, a political party that has been damned for its identity with a style that it did *not* choose — modernism — ought to have learnt its lesson.

In the meantime, Watkin and his regiment of Young Fogies, in double-breasted, pin-striped suits and wing collars, have ridden forth on a people's crusade to SAVE Britain's Heritage of Georgian country houses and neo-Georgian telephone boxes. The Conservative Party basks in the reflected glory. And, by analogy, the right can claim that Western European civilisation — which established the correct relationship between


Has there ever been a period of Great Architecture...
which has not been the product of exploitation and inequality ?
Presumably not, since any group of people with money to burn on Great Architecture..
must have got that money at someone elses expense.
So the lessons of architectural history as written ..
lead to shallow emulations,or worse..
more thorough emulations...
of what should never have been in the first place,
whilst the unwritten, unclassified history...
..of the buildings in which the majority of people still live and work...
..and more,of the way in which those buildings are actually USED...
is hidden beneath that great cuckoo heritage of Archibollocks.

Andrew Squire

*History of Western Architecture *is published by Barrie and Jenkins at £19.95*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tradition and individual talent, enabling genius to flourish — is safe in its hands.

But let us re-examine the right's case. Modern architecture committed the Ethical Fallacy; classical architecture is value-free and intrinsically beautiful. Watkin, exonerating classical architecture from the charge that it is morally contaminated by Hitler's use of it, asserts that 'architecture is itself neither totalitarian nor democratic'. And yet, in his own *History*, we find a rich anthology of Ethical and Romantic Fallacies. Here, with my italics, is Watkin's account of the Pantheon in Rome.

> Its form is circular, endless and without seam *like* the empire which conceived it, then in the meridian of its splendour. The near perfection of this circular domed interior, utterly *unlike* anything previously seen on the face of the earth, *seemed the symbol* and the *consequence* of an immutable union between the gods, man and the state. It immediately became, and remained over the centuries, a *symbol*, more cogent even than the Parthenon, of man's highest *religious* and *political* ambitions.

The inescapable truth is that the very forms of architecture, classical included, develop in response to ethical factors. Public monumental architecture must, by definition, be both ethical and expressive — and this was so long before the 19th century.

Take Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), much revered by Watkin and Co., the first 'Renaissance man' and author of the first Renaissance treatise on architecture, who bluntly asserted that a country's architecture was absolutely determined by its politics, constitution and class structure. Architecture was the state's instrument for creating a healthy and well ordered society. Even beauty, defined as harmonious mathematical proportions, was functional — instilling harmony and peacefulness in the spirits of citizens, thereby preventing social disorder.

Alberti, not a Goth, believed in the magic of divine harmony. He was not, however, prepared to trust it totally, so insisted that the 'scoundrel rabble' be walled up within a moated and garrisoned inner city. Dr Watkin omits this fact, but does observe that Alberti 'saw architecture as a civic art in which the ordered hierarchy of social and religious ideals could be expressed with clarity and dignity'. More, surely, than a matter of expression, this is the architecture of the prison camp — besides being a striking instance of the Environmental Determinist Fallacy.

Further examples are unnecessary. Dr Watkin and his friends admire classical architecture for the ethical reason that it celebrates the Imperium of Western European and Catholic Civilisation over Islam and all barbarisms. And, despite his assertion that architecture is 'neither totalitarian nor democratic', a building like the Parthenon was due 'as it always is, to powerful individuals' — like Pericles, who dominated the outwardly 'democratic committees'. Only absolute power in the hands of a great male individual can provide the opportunities for dictatorial architects to create monuments. No silly nonsense about public participation. Absolutism, hierarchy and inequality are justified, through a neat inversion of Rousseau, by their supreme 'artistic' achievements.

How does Dr Watkin handle the history of modern architecture? The short answer is, with even greater confusion than in his treatment of the ethical issue. On the one hand he wants to identify it with socialism as an Ethical Fallacy. Discussing Le Corbusier he extracts the clichéd formula: Modernism = Socialism = High-Rise Flats. But, like an adolescent gadfly, he also wishes to irritate surviving believers in the socialist morality of modern architecture by showing how it served Italian fascism, German industrialism, the inter-war British professional classes and post-war US capitalism. It's all true, but it contradicts his major historical argument: that modern architecture was socialist and committed the Ethical Fallacy. Either it was socialist or it was not. If not, then Watkin, and Scruton, as professional academics, must admit they are wrong.

Ornament and crime

If modern architecture wasn't socialist, what was it? Amazingly, Watkin lacks a coherent account of the origins of this single most disastrous episode in the whole history of architecture — so let me help him. Modern architecture was indeed created to serve an ethical theory, but not a socialist theory. The most important theorist was the Viennese architect Adolf Loos, whose 1908 essay 'Ornament and Crime' has become an aphorism and who justified the removal of ornament on the grounds of economic progress, not towards socialism, but towards the free-market capitalism of Britain and the USA. His ideas came from Herbert Spencer, the English Social Darwinist, a diehard opponent of state intervention who held the absurdly reductionist view that all clothing, let alone ornament, originated as trophies of war, developing into the status symbols of feudal societies. In the shift to a contractual free-market economy, sartorial symbols like gold braid and, indeed, all decoration, were replaced by the dark suit, the uniform of modern man. For a progressive Austrian of this period, ornament was the sign of arrested economic development and, hence, a crime. Loos hated gypsies, peasants and all primitive peoples. For him, and his disciple Le Corbusier, modern architecture was simply the equivalent of the modern suit, both a symbolic expression and an instrument of industrial modernisation. Hence the true appeal of modern architecture to so many superficially different political persuasions, hence its continued appeal to business and hence the real reason why true conservatives, like Watkin and Scruton, who abhor the political economy of *laissez-faire*, also hate modern architecture. Why don't they come clean?

The falsehood that socialism was the ideology of modern architecture has been sustained, in this country, by a simple device. As Lord Kennett, a Labour minister at Housing from 1966-70, has pointed out: it was a Tory government which, in 1956, enacted the subsidy which caused the High-Rise Disaster, but it was the Labour local authorities who were forced to implement the policy and, thus, Labour has borne the brunt of the blame. Yet, within 18 months of Labour's election in 1964, legislation to remove the subsidy had been drafted — on the grounds that low-rise housing permitted high densities at lower cost and that, anyway, high-rise flats were unpopular with Labour voters. The Watkin-Scruton thesis is false. All architecture is ethical. The ethic of modern

GET NS FREE FOR 3 MONTHS

'. . . the leading magazine of left or centre-left debate'

— **Hugo Young**
Guardian 5 March 1987

A thorn in the flesh to the conformist and the authoritarian for nearly 75 years, the *New Statesman* is once again the most talked-about journal in Britain.

To a barrage of praise from professional commentators and backhanded compliments from the scandalised, we're having a renaissance of fine writing, distinguished names, world-class scoops — and frank opinions that find no voice elsewhere.

If you're not already a subscriber, use the form below to subscribe to the *New Statesman* and we'll send it to you **completely free for 3 months.**

If before the end of your free period you decide you don't want to continue with your subscription, write and let us know. We'll cancel your order immediately and refund any payment you have made.

**Offer applies to residents of the UK or Eire only.*

Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

_____ Postcode_____

Length of Subscription (Tick one) ☐ 1 year @ £40.00 ☐ 6 months @ £20.00

Return to New Statesman Subscriptions Freepost, London E2 8BR.
(No stamp is needed if posted in the UK.)

Payment Methods (complete one) EY6

Credit Card
Please charge my credit card number

☐ Access ☐ Visa ☐ American Express ☐ Diners Club

Expiry date_____

Signed_____ Date_____

☎ To place your order by telephone call 01-739 1737 with your credit card details.

Cheque / postal order
I enclose a cheque / postal order for £_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

architecture is free-market capitalism. The Conservatives, not Labour, were the vandals. They remain so — and Labour has only itself to blame if it fails to defend its own record.

But why does Watkin, who is no fool, peddle all this contradictory claptrap about pure architecture and the fallacies? One answer must be that, were he to admit that classical architecture conveys significance through symbolic associations (the Romantic Fallacy), he would have to admit that, alongside its nice cultivated associations with Renaissance humanism, there are less appealing associations with the Roman and British Empires — and, above all, with the Third Reich. That is the real problem. To all Germans and most continentals today, classical architecture signifies one thing only. Another classical revivalist, Leon Krier, has tried to exonerate the classical architecture of Hitler's architect, Albert Speer, by the tautologous reasoning that it was just because classical architecture was pure and absolute that the Nazis employed it as a deceptive symbol of true civilisation. Watkin quotes Krier with approval: 'Architecture and Building are only concerned with creating a built environment which is beautiful and solid, agreeable, habitable and elegant.' But Dr Watkin and Herr Krier can never purge classical architecture of that stain. Hitler liked it because it was overladen with value. And it can never now lose the associations it has acquired through Nazism.

Moreover, the very origins of classical architecture are rooted in political symbolism. For example, in 241 BC Rome sacked the Etruscan hill city of Falerii Veteres and built a walled city for the survivors. Its main gate, still standing, is a Roman arch: a monument to Romanitas. When Rome conquered Gaul an aqueduct was built across the Gard valley by piling one triumphal arch upon another. Imperialising Renaissance Europe readopted the Roman arch. Dr Valerie Fraser has shown that the conquistadores built every single entrance of the humblest church in the remotest region of South America as a triumphal arch to represent the triumph of Western European Christian civilisation over the Indians, who had no arches.

Equally, it made perfect sense for the 19th-century industrialist, associating the aristocracy with classical country houses and gold braid jackets, to differentiate himself from them by wearing black broadcloth and building his house in a different style. Just as in dress different types of cloth and tailoring have articulated ethical distinctions, so too with different forms and building materials in architecture. Perhaps ethical positions are only real when such choices are made.

So modern architecture is utterly abhorrent not for the reasons given by Watkin — that it served an ethical theory — but because that ethic is dehumanising. And although, as an alternative, classical architecture shouldn't be dismissed for being unreal or backward looking, in the end it simply has to be: its associations with Nazism make it eternally unacceptable.

In what style, then, should we build? Gothic is too obvious an answer, but one can propose certain values by which building should be guided. First, building must be governed by a finer morality, rather than no morality at all, particularly where the interests of users and the general public are concerned. Second, the parish council needs to be re-established as the basis of local government and planning to protect amenity and livelihoods. Third, the dictatorial 'great architect', indeed any architect, should no longer mediate between people and their physical surroundings. To rephrase Colin Ward in his new book on Chartres: the architect is not a special kind of person; every person is or could be a special kind of architect. Fourth, as a corollary, the work of building must be difficult — not, as now, because it is monotonous or backbreaking, but because it calls for the highest skill, ingenuity and intelligence. Fifth, monuments should celebrate values other than force.

Sixth, every tyrant with architectural pretensions has echoed the words of the Emperor Augustus, 'I found Rome brick and left it marble.' I look, instead, for building that uses not the eternal materials of the thousand year Reich, nor concrete and plate glass, but brick and wood and sparkling glass, liquid, figured and richly stained.

Seventh, this architecture would be richly and naturally adorned in celebration of the diversity of the seas and forests which mankind's modernist plunder is destroying. □

FOSM

Fairly · Serious · Monthly

THE UK'S FIRST MAGAZINE TO BE WRITTEN BY ITS READERS

MAY ISSUE

Belfast despatches:
Sinn Fein and UDA interviews

The new Left publicity machines

Theatre's women directors

Comics come of age

Are we watching too much Eastenders?

PLUS:

Politics • arts • media • news • fashion • fiction • music • ecology • travel • opinions

OUT NOW 85p

BRINGING THE PRESS TO THE PEOPLE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARTS

US soldiers learning to be *men* at the expense of a few Vietnamese

CINEMA

Exorcism of a nation's guilt

Judith Williamson

Platoon
Odeon, Leicester Square

Los Angeles

IT ISN'T OFTEN that a movie draws editorial comment from the *New York Times* but, last month, its op.ed. page carried the serious suggestion that all young boys should be taken to see *Platoon*. Winner of four Oscars, topping the box office here for weeks, *Platoon* is the movie Americans love to love about the war they have learned to love to hate. Director Oliver Stone has become a national hero; a Vietnam vet, the fact that he raised the money for the film and produced it outside the studios on a budget somewhat lower than the billions required by Hollywood is seen as proof that it represents some imperative drive to expression of the Vietnam experience.

For the idea common to both the American public's and publications' response to *Platoon* is that this is the film that really tells it like it is (was). 'I think what you're saying is that for the first time you really understand what happened over there,' Stone told the Academy of Motion Picture Arts as he accepted his awards last month. The National dailies unanimously concurred, and even the left press seems to share the popular view. The film makes its own aspiration to tell it like it is very clear at the outset, with bodies in bags leaving Saigon and the much remarked close-up of flies crawling over our hero's skin as he toils through the jungle. But, although *Platoon* continues to wear its nitty-gritty naturalistic pretensions on its sleeve for perhaps the first half hour, it is fundamentally an entirely formulaic war movie, more 'artistic' than many in its genre but true to conventions in both characters and narrative.

We join the platoon with Chris Taylor (Charlie Sheen) who, having volunteered from college, conveniently provides us with a literate, white, middle-class sensibility through which to observe the war. With the structure of identification typical of the genre, his 'greenness' channels our entry into army life; as he becomes absorbed in it, so do we. Like all its genre the film places a high value on good soldiery and we rapidly become engaged in the mechanics of combat. Other generic clichés abound: The Bad Sgt Barnes (Tom Berenger) is covered in ugly scars while the Good Sgt Elias (William Defoe) is a hippy hero endowed with almost supernatural insights about the outcome of the war — and with an almost supernatural capacity to absorb lead. The most gut-wrenching moment of the film is when he staggers out of the jungle raising his arms to the US helicopter as Barnes flies on, deliberately leaving him to die.

The Christ-like image is the one chosen to advertise *Platoon*, with the caption 'The first casualty of war is innocence'. This now ubiquitous slogan contains the key to the real issue at stake not only in the film but in the wider discourse surrounding it. *Platoon*'s whole narrative is a trajectory from innocence to experience, as the clean-cut boy finally becomes a man, covered in mud and blood. The film's opening quotation from Ecclesiasticus, 'Rejoice O Young man in thy Youth', the elegaic use of Samuel Barber's Adagio

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for Strings and the nostalgic use of 1960s pop music all suggest a mourning for not merely an individually but a nationally lost innocence and youth. Yet, even at the very end, its hero still has that shell-shocked baby look reminiscent of Rambo.

Rambo's Look — an icon of our time — is central to the way US macho values are coping in representation with the frustrating failures of US imperialism. Rambo may be a maniac but his expression resembles nothing so much as that of a hurt, sulky child. Within that enormous, muscular body, it suggests, lurks a lost, innocent little boy, dumb with righteous pain. Nothing could more nearly express a certain strand of sentiment within the USA in relation to 'Nam. *Top Gun* has already shown us that US marines are really cute, mixed-up kids. In *Platoon*, innocence is set up as a key value through the very emphasis on its destruction by experience.

But most revealing of all is the way the innocence/experience dichotomy displaces another, more telling, dichotomy hinged on the same word but more threatening to the American public. For the other quality which is the obvious opposite of innocence is guilt. This is the emotion conspicuous by its absence from the whole *Platoon* discourse. The film manages to displace a moral focus from what the US army did to the Vietnamese onto a fundamentally macho conflict within its own ranks: the massacre of an entire village — clearly standing in some way for My Lai — serves *Platoon*'s narrative only to detonate its more central antagonism, the almost familial feud between the two US sergeants, whom Taylor refers to at the end as fathers. Whatever problematic feelings might be engendered by this terrible act are thus neatly dealt with through the simple device of splitting: the human face of the US army is embodied in the biblically-named martyr Elias, while all its evil is loaded onto the scarred face of Barnes, whom Taylor eventually kills in a final act of expiation.

So why is this need for absolution surfacing now? There have been many generic films about Vietnam, for example *The Boys in Company C* (1977) or *Rumour of War* (1980), besides the better known *Deerhunter* or *Apocalypse Now*. *Platoon* is not so very different from any of these, yet it has become the focus of an unprecendented amount of public attention. It seems to tap into a sense of unease, an escalation of national guilt which has as much to do with Contra atrocities in Central America as with Vietnam. What is so interesting when President Reagan admits his 'error' over Irangate and arms for the Contras, is that the very fact of his 'confession' seems to absolve him of the guilt that, logically, it confirms. At a time when American imperialism seems just as amok as it ever did in Vietnam, *Platoon*, whatever its avowed intentions, corresponds to some national search for a discourse of purging and healing; a way of, precisely, confessing and remaining innocent at the same time. □

VIDEO

Freeze frames

Ian Penman

Captive
Virgin
Chinese Boxes
Vestron
Dead Pigeon on Beethoven Street
Thorn EMI

IF VIDEO REPRODUCTION can consign our favourite works to an asymmetry of clumsy excisions, then the sheer range of titles available at least grants a compensatory pleasure. A healthy circulation is vouchsafed films which would otherwise be utterly neglected apart from the occasional valiant NFT 2 screening.

Paul Mayersberg is known chiefly as a writer: of Roeg's *The Man Who Fell To Earth* and *Eureka*, Oshima's *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence*, and the more obscure but underrated *The Disappearance*, directed by Stuart Cooper in 1977. His first film as director, **Captive** (originally — and more originally — called *Heroine*, a title apparently nixed for its narcotic euphonia), was released last year to almost universal (i.e. parochial) condemnation. It was one of those films where the Critics' Circle seems to have taken personal offence, as if some arcane viewing code had been violated. This is ironical because within *Captive's* TV news melodrama (a bored young heiress is kidnapped by three young terorrists; despite — or partly because of — her ordeal she comes to side with them), Mayersberg has planted an allegory about the harm of habitual (British) ways of seeing, the death and rebirth of vision.

Mayersberg uses elements of fable to suggest that there's nothing peculiarly modern about his heroine's ordeal. Rowena Le Vay (Irina Brook) has been virtually incarcerated inside a turreted mansion by her tycoon father (Oliver Reed, perfectly cast), whose wife died bearing their daughter. His birthday gift to Rowena is one of her mother's old dresses. Nothing of the everything this fabulous girl has belongs to her.

Given Mayersberg's formidable intelligence one might venture that even the girl's name is not her own property. In Edgar Allan Poe's fable 'Ligeia', the narrator loses his eponymous love and, in mourning, transfers his affection to the Lady Rowena, whose room 'lay in a high turret of the castellated abbey'.

Captive is an Anglo-French co-production, shot on Fuji film; Rowena's 'torturers' are made up of one Japanese boy and a French couple: the techniques of blindfolding, isolation and alienation they inflict upon their captive (audience) are probably a half-serious, half-pithy echo of Mayersberg's chosen fields of reference for his own cinema. 'People will think it's political', worries the terrorist girl — aesthetic liberation is actually the primary concern. The Japanese/French alliance points us to societies where questions of 'style' have always been an integral part of culture rather than something mixed up and added on later, or simply absent. It's only when Rowena accepts the destruction of her culture, and her past, that she is freed. 'We are all blind for a while then something helps us to see.' And that past is heavily implicated (in the person of her father and his tastes) as a 'high cultural' one — supposedly richer, more important, more moral.

Maysersberg once said in an interview for *Sight and Sound:* 'If you still believe the world is flat, that's fine, you can go on making flat earth movies as most filmmakers do.' *Captive* criticises — by being an example *against* the grain — the danger inherent in endlessly trying to remake the same picture. It opens with a shot of Rowena's eye, closed; and ends with her looking out of her castle. The fantasy is over — she is no longer the occluded fantasy of others, of her father, or of the besotted Japanese boy who also wants to substitute her for someone lost in his past. To fill up the space between an unbearable past and an impossible future — this is what heroines are for. People get stuck in time, Mayersberg seems to be saying, partly because the reflections of *self* their culture offers provide so little chance of deviation or re-invention.

FAREWELL
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'COME AND SEE'
FAREWELL (PG)
ПРОЩАНИЕ
A FILM BY ELEM KLIMOV
ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SOVIET FILMS OF THE PRESENT DECADE Variety
English Subtitles · An Artificial Eye Release
FROM FRIDAY MAY 1ST
FILM AT 1.20 3.45 6.10 8.40
CAMDEN PLAZA
CAMDEN TOWN TUBE 485 2443

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Britain seems to regard any truck with continental ideas as a form of contamination (ideas are invariably quarantined for years), and Chris Petit's **Chinese Boxes**, like *Captive*, met with mass bemusement upon its release. It was made, breathlessly, alongside his *Flight To Berlin* — almost, it seems, as a whim — and is essentially *Flight* at a slightly more oblique angle — someone trying (and failing) to take flight out of a Berlin mired in shoddy criminality. *Flight* began with *its* heroine under interrogation by the Law — 'I don't know the connections. I don't know what you want me to tell you' — and *Chinese Boxes* has the same loping impatience with straightforward storytelling. As *Captive* slowly unfolds an allegory about scope, *Chinese Boxes* is a more delirious play around the laws of narrative and genre.

Both *Captive* and *Chinese Boxes* were made by ex-critics (possibly the reason other critics were so sniffy about them), who *do* tend to go overboard on signalling their references. *Chinese Boxes* does indeed suggest Borges, Derrida, Calvino, but also a cartoon called *Ain't That Ducky* in which Daffy Duck and a prototype Elmer Fudd spend the entire Tune chasing a McGuffinesque briefcase, although they're neither of them sure why. Its contents turn out to be a piece of card on which is inscribed. . . . THE END.

But Petit takes the squint-eyed tone seriously enough to make this a good contender for a rental double-bill with Sam Fuller's infamous **Dead Pigeon on Beethoven Street**. Also shot in Germany in 1972 on a tiny budget it again gives the impression of an improvised narrative exulting in its own randomness. It manages to be both utterly banal in observance of conventions and wildly personal in its application of them — full of jokey inserts, signs and trails. Ideal for running remote control checks. □

TELEVISION

Spoils of Waugh

Hugo Williams

IT'S A YEAR since Chernobyl, claims ITN, 'and only 16 of the 150 villages evacuated have so far been resettled . . .' Terrible that, but what are we to make of the news desk's attempt to wrap up the figures in responsible prose: 'This means that a substantial dislocation of the population is still in place.' But I thought you just said . . .

If proof were needed that the plummy voice was an endangered species, Prince Edward provided it in some of his less than exhilarating appearances last week. Charles still speaks with a distinctive oddness, Andrew is really sub-Hooray by now, but Edward talks frankly common in his anxiety to make the grade on **Saturday Superstore** (BBC1) and **The Duke's Awards** (BBC1). His hair, too, has received a distinctly high-street layering job in its eagerness to stagger the last few hours before total baldness. If the Queen's son can't talk proper and get a decent trim, what on earth is the point of carrying on with all this?

Most of the best stuff in **Scoop** (ITV) happened early on, in London, at *The Daily Beast*, before the wretched Boot sets out on his plotty mission. Once the action moved to Ismâ'ilîya it had to compete with a faraway place's natural talent for self-satire and lost its way in the usual deployment of colourful native elements, etc, which in itself was lovely, but not a bit funny. I use the past tense advisedly to distinguish the film from the novel, which takes these difficulties in its stride.

The whole thing hinges on the old Hollywood mistaken identity gambit, which allows Waugh to present himself at his sadistic best. The innocent William Boot, 'Countryman' diarist for *The Daily Beast*, is ordered to Africa by the witless proprietor Lord Copper in place of one John Boot, a would-be spy recommended by one of Copper's socialite friends. Explaining all this takes up much visual time and energy, like shifting scenery about, a thing Waugh wouldn't have dreamed of being seen doing. A telegram arrives at the decaying Cornish seat of the wrong branch of the Boot family. 'Nothing serious, I hope?' asks patriarch Michael Hordern, giving it his usual fruity theatrical knight treatment. 'Yes, I'm afraid so,' says William. 'I've been called to London by the paper.' The entire indoor and outdoor staff of Boot Magna turn out to wish him a tearful farewell in the Morris. There follows the best part of the film in which the divine Denholm Elliott — 'No, I'm the foreign editor, I don't do much of the printing myself' — has to break it to the dedicated naturist that he is off to a war zone.

Michael Maloney's is a face the cinema finds it easy to write on and he clears it for volumes at this point. We see whirling dervishes beating up his beloved great crested grebes and feel a tingle of *schadenfreude* at his fate. 'Is Mr Boot prepared for his trip?' asks the half-sharp proprietor setting up the immortal reservation. 'Up to a point, Lord Copper,' replies Elliott, buttoning his expressive lips in anxious servility. We are now treated to Waugh's overview of newspaper owners, the passage presumably which director Gavin Millar hoped would 'get up lots of peoples' noses'. 'It's the Patriots against the Traitors,' he says, elucidating his 'policy for the war'. 'We shall expect the first victory around the middle of July.'

It's downhill all the way after that, as plot drives out the incidentals that are the whole point of this kind of madness. As it is, every joke seems to come equipped with three pages of scaffolding. It's amusing that the entire Press Corps are tricked by the devilish Hitchcock into leaving the capital for a non-existent front, but it is rather bad luck on Waugh's lighter-than-air organisation that it should be revealed as such a Heath Robinson contraption so late in life. Watching the elaborate exodus into the desert, one could see money being wasted as the delicate mirage of satire evaporated in the heat. Someone falling off the back of a camel is no substitute for wit.

Exposing the scaffolding on purpose, most perfectly demonstrated by Michael Frayn's play *Noises Off*, is an altogether post-Waugh, post-modernist tendency which doesn't usually come off except on rag days. It certainly didn't for the tireless Ruby Wax on **Don't Miss Wax** (C4). With mad gusto we were allowed glimpses of pretend backstage areas with pretend chaos going on in preparation for Miss Wax's pretend chat show. This kind of box-within-a-box TV only makes one want to go on opening boxes until the final black hole of televisual pointlessness is reached or one throws the whole thing out the window. □

THEATRE

Mortality play

Victoria Radin

Sarcophagus
VLADIMIR GUBARYEV trans. MICHAEL GLENNY
The Pit

'THIS IS NOT the age of science — it's the age of disaster,' says the central character in *Sarcophagus*. An accurate enough statement, one might think, in the wake of the Chernobyl catastrophe; a wake (in both senses of the word) which is the subject of Vladimir Gubaryev's *glasnost*-reckoned play.

We know that 31 people died, over 200 suffered acute radiation poisoning and 135,000 lost their homes. Estimates of future victims from radiation-induced cancer go up to half a million. All sorts of experts now predict that a major reactor accident will occur somewhere in the world at least once a decade; the head of nuclear safety at the International Atomic Energy Agency, Dr Morris Rosen, even says this might be 'acceptable'.

Vladimir Gubaryev is an expert as well. He is the Science Editor of *Pravda*, author of books on nuclear energy and space and of three other plays

TATE GALLERY
PATRONS OF NEW ART AWARD

THE TURNER PRIZE 1987

Sponsored by Drexel Burnham Lambert

The fourth TURNER PRIZE *of* £10,000 *will be awarded in November to the person judged by the New Art Jury to have made an outstanding contribution to art in Britain in the twelve months preceding 31 May 1987.*

Nominations are invited by letter to the Director of the Tate Gallery by 5 June 1987.

TATE GALLERY
MILLBANK LONDON SW1P 4RG

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and several television scripts. He holds many awards and, needless to say, is a member of the Party. At the first night of *Sarcophagus*, which was attended by a Tass agency reporter, Gubaryev sat in the row behind me — very tall, big and affable-looking. Four days after the disaster, he was the first journalist on the scene; two months later came his play, which he wrote in a passion in only eight or nine days.

That passion seems to me to be misdirected and parochial. The play's central image is the concrete sarcophagus which must enshroud the Chernobyl Reactor Number 4 for the next 100,000 years if no lethal radiation is to escape. 'That's a fine monument to leave our descendants, isn't it?' bitterly asks the same person who had spoken of the age of disaster. Yet his bitterness, and the author's, is reserved for the Chernobyl employees who made the mistakes which caused the accident — or, at the most, for the rigid bureaucratic structure which encouraged them to do so. Although Gubaryev is careful to universalise these characters — who are apparently collations of real people — he nowhere seems to make the, to me, blindingly obvious leap and apply that constant of human fallibility to the prediction of future nuclear power station disasters.

As 'faction' or 'docudrama' the play is modestly clever and tears one along by the hook of its appalling subject matter. It takes place in a 'radio-biology' (new word to me) clinic for terminal cases where the sole patient is Bessmertny, or 'The Immortal', whose survival, in the true sense of living beyond his life, has been extended by more than a year by means of 16 operations. As played, and superbly, by Nick Woodeson in this production directed with a good deal of care and extra-textual liveliness by Jude Kelly, Bessmertny is totally bald, yellow-coloured and deformed of tooth. He is also loquacious, possessed of a brutal cheer and — but for his conclusions, which are those of the author — all-seeingly wise: a mutant clown or holy fool. It is he who speaks of the sarcophagus; but he also believes that the cause was a 'system which ensures that in the Soviet Union nobody takes responsibility for anything'. If he had been a little bit wiser, he would have seen that this is not a purely local or remediable fault.

To this clinic comes a trio of young women doctors named, in an elaboration of the text (published by Penguin) Faith, Hope and Charity. All eventually leave. They are followed by nine victims of Chernobyl: of which two, an old peasant woman whose major worry is her unmilked cow and a burglar who happened to be breaking and entering at quite the wrong place and time, have nothing to do with the power station. Arriving by foot or wheeled in on a trolley, the nine are doomed to die, one by one, in deaths semaphored by the flash of the red light over their 'isolation cubicle', and the wordless bundling out in a snow-white body bag — soon to be encased in lead coffins and their own concrete sarcophagi.

It is through the seven Chernobyl workers, who range in caste from its Director to the Chief Fire Officer's Driver, that Gubaryev gets to grips with his message. A government investigator arrives to question the men — surprisingly gently and politely, considering the heat of the moment — and out comes the petty, human face of catastrophe, wars, holocausts. On the one hand there are (perhaps optimistic?) stories of heroism. On the other, there are tales of cupidity, nepotism, negligence, bureaucratic bungling and meanness and, in the case of Chernobyl's Director — a nonentity whom Gubaryev tells us wasn't even a good student — small-minded self-serving.

It is the Director (a finely-detailed performance by Bernard Horsfall) who gets the full force of the author's dismay, wringing from Bessmertny the uncharacteristically stupid demand that this man be kept alive as a kind of moral leper: 'Let them frighten their children with the sight of him.' But all we really need to be frightened is the sight of Bessmertny himself, who was irradiated not by Chernobyl, but by falling into a drunken sleep, during a laboratory experiment.

When one thinks about the play, one realises that *glasnost* means something very different to the Soviets. From the evidence of *Sarcophagus*, it seems to signify a form of restricted self-criticism with an underlying didactic purpose. Seen from a Russian point of view — and the play is currently in repertory in 30 Russian theatres — *Sarcophagus* encodes an exemplary public morality: Bessmertny suffered his lethal dose of radiation because he was a drunk; the peasant woman embodies the dangers of ignorance; the burglar, a criminality which the author uses to point up the deeper immorality of the Chernobyl Director. Gubaryev is critical of the governmental order to evacuate the area, which was delayed until 24 hours after the accident. But he completely omits the fact that the Soviets waited to inform even their own people of the incident until nearly three days after it occurred, and that the Health Minister neglected to warn Kiev residents to take precautions until one week later.

And, while an American bone marrow specialist who is clearly modelled on Dr Robert Gale becomes the target of a lot of ambivalent authorial huffing and puffing, nowhere in the play does Gubaryev mention how their local disaster affected the world outside the Soviet bloc. A limited form of public breast-beating: yes; true *glasnost*: no. Carol Gillies, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Paul Venables, John Burgess are also excellent among a huge and hard-working cast: apparently many actors turned the play down. □

'HEART-WARMING, HEART-BREAKING'
DAILY TELEGRAPH
'BLAZING PLAY
BLAZING PRODUCTION'
SUNDAY TIMES
James Baldwin's
The Amen Corner
LYRIC THEATRE SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, W1
Box Office and c cards: 01.437 3686/7, 434 1550, 434 1050, 734 5166/7
or 24 hour 7 day cc bookings (no fee): 01.240 7200 or 01.741 9999

Books

CHINA

A game of cat and Mao

W. J. F. Jenner

Surfing the waves of repression and liberalisation, China's writers, these last two years, have began taking more and more risks.

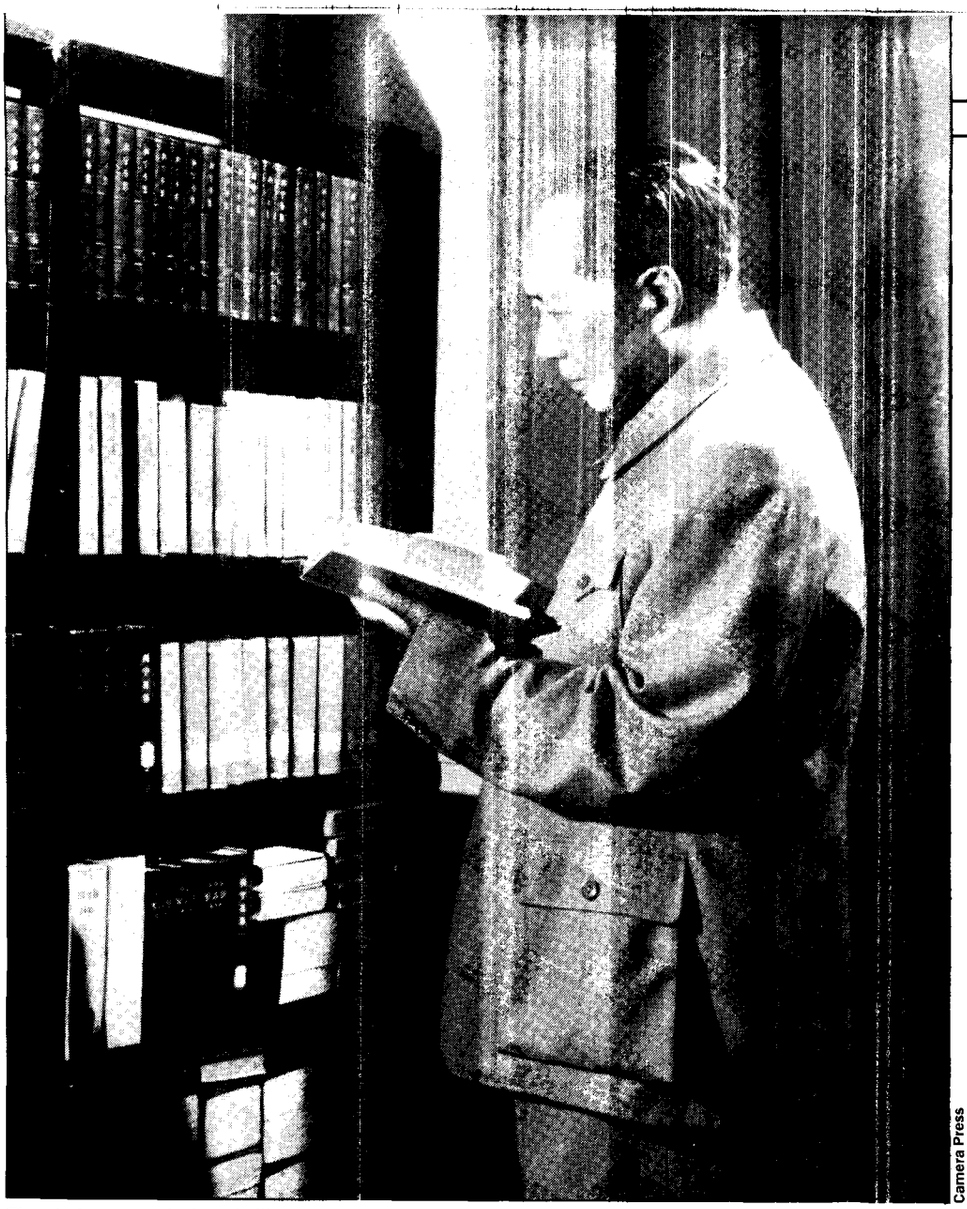
MAO'S PRESENT SUCCESSORS have inherited his fear of scribblers who do not avoid awkward truths. Two of the worst offenders have been noisily expelled from the Communist Party and the chief editor of *People's Literature*, the redoubtable Liu Xinwu, has been suspended from his job after bringing out a freaked-out bumper issue for January and February packed with outrageous delights. We do not know how many other writers and editors are being helped to see the error of their ways.

Though this is the worst assault on writers for several years, it is half-hearted by the standards of the past. When in 1957 the party machine savaged writers who had been even mildly critical of how it was running China it labelled them as 'rightists' and ruined their lives. That silenced most of the best. Within ten years all the writers had been gagged by the Cultural Revolution, including even the most docile of party hacks. For another ten years after that virtually no new writing of any value was published.

In November 1977 the boredom was relieved by a story about a harrassed schoolteacher and his difficulties in integrating a gang member into his class of middle-school students. Although 'Class Teacher' now seems an artless and preachy period piece, at the time it was astonishing to read about insoluble social problems that were not blamed on class enemies. It opened a door towards engagement with real life through which a few other writers cautiously followed in 1978. Its author, Liu Xinwu, has since revealed a more and more searching and independent mind till, as chief editor of *People's Literature*, he made his splendid gesture last month.

From the end of 1978 onwards a new generation of amateur writers rapidly transformed the literary scene. First in home-made literary magazines, then in the rapidly growing number of officially published journals, they produced stories and poems with a raw honesty that overcame technical limitations. They were voices from the urban generation that had flung itself into the Cultural Revolution in 1966, then been purged of illusions by the ensuing political struggles and by the backwardness of the village and frontier areas to which they were exiled. Life had forced them to think for themselves, and not to need a faith: a profound liberation that few of their elders can even understand. The main aim of these writers was to tell truths about society and themselves and the main achievement of 1978-82

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Camera Press

The chairman exploring his library in the days when books were little red

was to make writing more honest than it had been at any time since 1949.

The editorial support of the rightists of 20 years earlier who were now running the best journals was essential to this flowering and some of them took up their pens again, most notably Liu Binyan, the investigative reporter who had scourged bureaucrats in 1956 and resumed this dangerous career in 1979. Another veteran who responded to the mood of those years with an understated artistry that makes her testimony of the Cultural Revolution all the more effective is Yang Jiang: her *A Cadre School Life: Six Chapters* is already a minor classic.

No sooner had the literary revival begun than it came under fire and this has continued ever since, sometimes from snipers with silencers on their rifles, sometimes from the massed propaganda artillery. Not a year has passed without a well organised attempt to bully the freer spirits into submission, but the most that the campaigns have achieved has been a temporary contraction of the range of the possible. Some have been very quickly counter-productive, most notably the notorious 1983 drive against 'spiritual pollution'. Most writers who come under official attack emerge with their reputations boosted: Bai Hua, Zhang Jie, Zhang Xinxin, Wang Ruowang, Sha Yexin, Dai Houying, Yu Luojin, Ba Jin . . . For eight years now Liu Binyan has hardly ever been out of trouble from the party bosses all over China whose abuses of power he has exposed in print. In 1980 he half recanted but, since then, has taken an increasingly tough line and grown in stature thereby. His expulsion from the Party in January will have done more damage to the party's reputation than to his.

By 1982 the first wave of the literary revival had gone as far as it could. The limits of the permitted had been drawn, new breakthroughs in subject matter were not going to be allowed and the first attempts at putting experience into words brought home to new writers the need to read more and develop their skills. The chilly political climate of 1983 and 1984 was also more conducive to reflection than to publication.

The years 1985 and 1986 were by contrast so lively that they marked a new stage in the development of contemporary writing. By then it was no longer possible to generalise about writing as a whole, so differentiated was it becoming and so huge was the quantity being published in hundreds of magazines every month. Much was spectacularly bad. There was, for example, a rash of strikingly awful fiction about animals and hunters. But there has also been some writing that is well worth the effort of finding. The best of the poets of the first phase are still writing and the label 'obscure', once attached to them, now seems quite absurd: they are really rather straightforward. Now they are being challenged by even younger poets, some of whom write very complex poems that are worth the unravelling. Others are less indirect in their expression.

Among the writers of non-fiction one should remember Su Xiaokang for his courage in attacking corrupt officials. Zhang Xinxin and Sang Ye responded to the stimulus of Studs Terkel's oral histories to make a book of 100 ordinary people talking about their lives. When the first 58 of their interviews appeared simultaneously, divided between the January 1985 issues of five different magazines, they astonished readers because they read neither like the usual official interview, nor like fiction, but precisely like real people talking.

There is so much good fiction in the past couple of years that selection of a few names is invidious. The tyranny of conventional Chinese or 19th-century Western narrative structures is breaking down. Some writers try to escape into, or draw strength from, China's past and traditions. Others, such as Han Shaogong with his grim fantasy of rural isolation and idiocy 'Da, Da, Da', search for historical roots the better to dig them up. Chen Cun writes stories of unusual quality, such as 'One Day', an account of a little man's life that is meaningless because he never thinks. Some stories even force the reader to pay attention.

Some of the best of current fiction is represented in the provocative issue of *People's Literature* — as, too, is a very unpleasant story about Tibet that shows its author as a leering sensationalist focusing his lens on the biological details of two brothers dismembering their dead wife for a traditional sky burial. This story was the stick with which the guardians of orthodoxy belaboured the editor, as it 'vilifies the Tibetan people', though other and better stories in the issue are just as physically explicit. Sexual taboos, their observation and their breaking in contemporary Chinese writing, form a rich and fascinating subject and, as the political pressures on writers increase, we shall have to wait and see whether the prudery and hypocrisy of the fine moral traditions so admired by China's rulers will be imposed once more. □

FANTASY

Hero sandwiches

Colin Greenland

THE TRAVELLER IN BLACK is — or was — or will be — a sort of cosmic bobby, patiently patrolling 'that portion of the All which had been allotted to him as his individual responsibility'. Routine stuff, mostly: curbing a tyrant here, binding a wild elemental there, and generally doing his bit for the slow formation of logical order out of primal chaos. The justice he administers is the poetic kind, based on granting all the wishes people are unwise enough to utter in his shadowy presence. 'Oh that I had lasting darkness whereby to ply my trade!' cries the burglar overtaken by dawn, so the Traveller promptly awards him a cataract in each eye.

It's a lonely old job, melancholy even in its satisfactions. The Traveller is well aware that the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pleasures of a secure, law-abiding, permanent reality are a bit tame, really, compared to the cavortings of chaos on the grand scale. But somebody's got to do it.

The Compleat Traveller in Black (Methuen, £2.50) is the first collection of all five of John Brunner's tales of the man with many names, but a single nature. Drolly grave, ridiculed by the very formality of its presentation, this pageant of human vanities often recalls the disenchanted moralities of James Branch Cabell, and offers something of the same ironic pleasure. What a petty lot we are, according to Brunner, and how apt for chastening.

M. John Harrison, meanwhile, has given us up for good. Vitality gleams only in the alarming eyes of the brutal and corrupt, while the able are trammelled in doubt and everyone is rapt in toils of selfhood. Viriconium, city of haphazard alliances and inscrutable technologies, excoriates itself in a war of succession. What fun!

Actually, the first of his chronicles of Viriconium, **The Pastel City** (Unwin, £2.50) is also the most sombre, perhaps because in 1971 Harrison had not yet given up trying to rearrange the cumbersome furniture of sword and sorcery: desperate enterprises, jewel and weapon fetishes, tight-lipped machismo, treacherous villainy and all. A certain febrile decadence and random mayhem were obligatory. Harrison inserted characters who are individuals, deviants from type; bleak, particular landscapes; pain and muck. And, for anyone with an ear, some of the most accomplished and evocative writing ever to grace the genre. It is a treat to have *The Pastel City* back in print.

The psychic crushing of heroism is felt with differing degrees of self-pity by both Brunner's pilgrim with many names and Harrison's master of the nameless sword, who exhaust their energies on behalf of a society that neither notices nor understands. A relic of the Romantic mystique of chivalry, the syndrome is neatly set on its ears by Megan Lindholm in **Wizard of the Pigeons** (Corgi, £2.50). Her noble martyr is a tramp in Seattle, unable to come to terms with the fact that the skills of maiming and destruction at which he was taught to excel in Vietnam earn him no place back home in America. He squats, ill and uneasy, on the edge of his poorly-cauterised memories, living a life of fastidious repression rewarded with clothing and sustenance out of skips in alleyways, and a selection of precise and searching magical powers. All the derelicts in Lindholm's city are magicians in one way or another. One is a hard-handed sybil called Cassie, who seems to have lived forever, who has access to comfortable apartments in buildings that don't exist, and who never appears twice in the same body. She tells Wizard the occult force clawing at his defences is after them all in the end; she tells him he'd better shape up.

Wizard of the Pigeons is fancy urban fable in the vein of Russell Hoban and Peter Beagle. Like both of them Lindholm goes in too much for perfumed prose and a heavy-handed top-dressing of mythic resonance; but between the squalls of purple is something uncommonly tough about the connivance of cities, and the terrifying autonomy of the dispossessed, the struggle not just to survive, but to resist assimilation in favour of something less tangible but more authentic.

As is **You Bright and Risen Angels** (Deutsch, £11.95), a 300,000-word slab of fizzing, chittering weirdness from William T. Vollmann, who assures us this is only volume one, and gives us the chapter titles and a 'social gazette' of the complete work as an earnest of good faith. Or a metafictional scam. Or something. Here at any rate is Bug, 'a pale, stern, frostbitten revolutionary with glasses', beginning (and, intermittently, ending, because it's a not altogether linear book) his war against the reactionaries: Mr White, who owns everything, especially the electricity, and his crony Dr Dodger, who is behind every desk, at the other end of every phone; though the world is really run by the blue globes, who were 'created evil centuries ago' and have no ideals.

On Bug's side are the bugs. The System v. the Bugs. Bug is not himself a bug, just a lonely over-thoughtful boy bullied at summer camp and hounded in the swimming pool and tear-gassed on peace marches who forms a terrorist alliance of insects and the overlooked to strike back against the conspiracy. *You Bright and Risen Angels* is a fantasia on the emotional mutilations of childhood, on greed and ghosts, all plugged in and powered up and inflated into the monstrous epic simile that is America. Bug is the hero of the revolution, and he is no longer human. □

LETTERS

A woman's place

Griselda Pollock

The Correspondence of Berthe Morisot
ed. KATHLEEN ADLER and TAMAR GARB *Camden Press* £6.95

BERTHE MORISOT, together with her American colleague Mary Cassatt, have never been completely forgotten as members of the Impressionist group of painters. Indeed, they occupy a curious position: highly acclaimed in their lifetime, they became shadowy but still listed figures in the standard works of modernist art history. When feminists began to reclaim their 'hidden heritage', these artists were easily rediscovered candidates for women's art history.

Kathleen Adler and Tamar Garb are fully conscious of the need to understand why selected women such as Morisot (or Gwen John or, in literature, the Brontës and George Eliot) have been kept on the books while hundreds of others have been obliterated from the cultural record. In their excellent introduction, they delineate the specific characterisation of Berthe Morisot the painter as intuitive, spontaneous and truly feminine, accommodated both to later 19th-century views of Impressionism as a 'feminine' style and 20th-century modernist accounts of pure painterly concerns.

This image is made concrete in the selected correspondence, first published in English in 1957, which has influenced much of the subsequent writing about the artist. The first editor was the artist's grandson, Denis Rouart, who screened his ancestor completely. He did not pretend to be publishing a scholarly edition, but enmeshed her words and those of her friends and family in a lively biography. This has become a major impediment, for we cannot tell how complete the collection or any letter is, what has been left out and why.

Rightly, the present editors stress that we must realise Rouart's *construction* of Morisot within the social and artistic milieu of an *haute-bourgeois* family in the later 19th century. For instance, money is hardly mentioned in the letters, though it is clear that at one stage Morisot's husband has to use influence to find some paying employment. Later they write of an anticipated inheritance, but there is no clue to its material effects on their lives. There is only one text which permits a glimpse of the pressure of money. Morisot to her sister in 1879: 'Life is largely a question of money, which is not all to my taste . . .'

But for all the omissions and for all the shaping of the text by assumptions about the nature of femininity, these letters are extremely interesting. Perhaps because of the anxieties about class associated with maintenance of bourgeois femininity, the text reveals a lot about what can be called 'the spaces of femininity'. A constant preoccupation of both letters and Rouart's commentary is houses — a concern which also prevails in the correspondence of Mary Cassatt. Where to live, the constant search for inexpensive but 'pleasant' accommodation, or for summer villas to rent: these indicate a different meaning to the ideological theme of the home, a fantasy of stability and permanence which was not often the reality.

The house/family home is, however, the centre of social life for a woman like Morisot. She does meet friends at exhibitions and at the Salons, but even there, there are dangers — like finding oneself accompanied by the wrong man and left without a female chaperone. Morisot's contacts with her artistic colleagues occur through regular dinner parties at her home or through family visits. The close friendships evidenced with Renoir and Mallarmé are secured by common family concerns and relations. As Adler and Garb point out, Morisot would not attend Mallarmé's famous Tuesday evenings. Rouart notes that Morisot suggested facetiously that she and her daughter would attend dressed as men, while Morisot herself wrote, 'No, decidedly, the schoolbench would intimidate us too much.'

Through the Morisot correspondence we also glimpse the social relations of the better known male members of the Impressionist circle in a different guise from drinking, smoking and arguing at the cafés of Haussman's newly built Paris. The dinners, visits and extreme courtesies evidenced in these texts situate what modernist art history presents as avant-garde bohemians more firmly in the social niceties of bourgeois society. A surprising gap is evidence of contacts with women in the group. We know that Cassatt and Morisot were friendly but one wonders whether Rouart thought this friendship less exciting than contact with Monet, Renoir, Manet and Mallarmé.

This text symptomatically delineates aspects of class, but it is claimed as an important text in terms of studies of *women*, of *gender*. Adler and Garb stress, however, that Morisot cannot be claimed as feminist heroine for, despite coinciding with a major wave of French feminism, Morisot reveals

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

no interest and her close association with conservative and anti-feminist figures such as Mallarmé and Renoir suggests opposition. There is very little commentary on women's lives or issues in the letters so that statements such as this, which is extracted without any context for the year 1890, tantalises:

> Berthe was at that time engrossed in Marie Bashkirtseff's diary, to which she refers as follows: 'My admiration is dampened because of her mediocre painting; the "meeting" and the rest are awkward, commonplace, almost stupid, and very difficult to reconcile with her alert style, with so much intellectual boldness and grace. I associate in my mind two books by women: *Récits d'une soeur* and hers. The truth is that our value lies in feeling, in intention, in our vision that is subtler than that of men, and we can accomplish a great deal providing that affectation, pedantry and sentimentalism do not come to spoil everything.

The *Journals of Marie Bashkirtseff* (1890, republished by Virago in 1985) epitomises the opposite of this collection. A reflective and self-conscious text about being a woman, an aristocrat and an artist, the journals are everything which the Morisot letters are not. This quoted passage suggests why. It is so inconsistent, cliché-ridden, assertive of a positive difference between men and women, which is immediately recuperated by a listing of all the sins to which men say women are susceptible. To accomplish a great deal one must be and not be a women. Morisot has been represented since the 1880s as the great and feminine painter and the modern editors are right to warn us of this image as ideological construction. But it defines the paradox which professional bourgeois women such as Morisot lived out precisely because they did not, like Mary Cassatt and Marie Bashkirtseff, align themselves with feminism. □

PAPERBACKS

Kinds of loving

Paul Hallam

A GIACOMETTI TABLE, Soutine, Garbo, Callas, Versace jackets, Erasmus and Gary Cooper all get a mention in the first two pages of Andrew Harvey's **Burning Houses** (Flamingo, £3.50). An inventory of camp, this is the shared world of an elderly film director, Adolphe, and his adoring young novelist friend, Charles. Adolphe, esconced in his Paris Palazzo, beneath chandelier bells by Dali, surrounded by 'the delicious energies of destruction and despair', dispenses wisdom by the bucket (bucket by . . .) as he comments on his follower's short novel, a gay love story. Fortunately the novel within the novel proves engrossing and the relationship between writer and listener develops into a kind of love. Adolphe eventually directs Charles to a greater love, one with no goal, a kind of all-embracing love 'where the lion lies down with the Chihuahua', a love born of solitude. Anna, a friend of Charles, offers some air and a different perspective, mocking George Herbert's 'Love bade me welcome, but my soul drew back' with 'I should think it did, very sensible of it.'

Solitude doesn't sell like S/M and Jenny Diski's **Nothing Natural** (Methuen, £2.50) is promoted as 'a sexual shocker . . . with integrity'! The most shocking thing in the book is the total solitude of the heroine, a single parent, involved with a man whose nihilism seems 'herself taken to a logical conclusion'. To fill her sense of irrelevance, to punish herself for desire always to run from people, she fills the void with rough sex: 'some people had videos, she had Joshua.' When even that fails, she becomes a skilled depressive, just avoiding family and friends, just escaping incarceration by the health authority, remembering to buy chocolate biscuits with the pills and whisky at the supermarket to avoid drawing attention. It's an accomplished, bleak book, an exploration of a relationship 'without a narrative': the man never says when or if he'll be back. Sometimes the sex seems a kindness, an allowing of the acting out of fantasies, at others just a terrible confirmation of her loneliness.

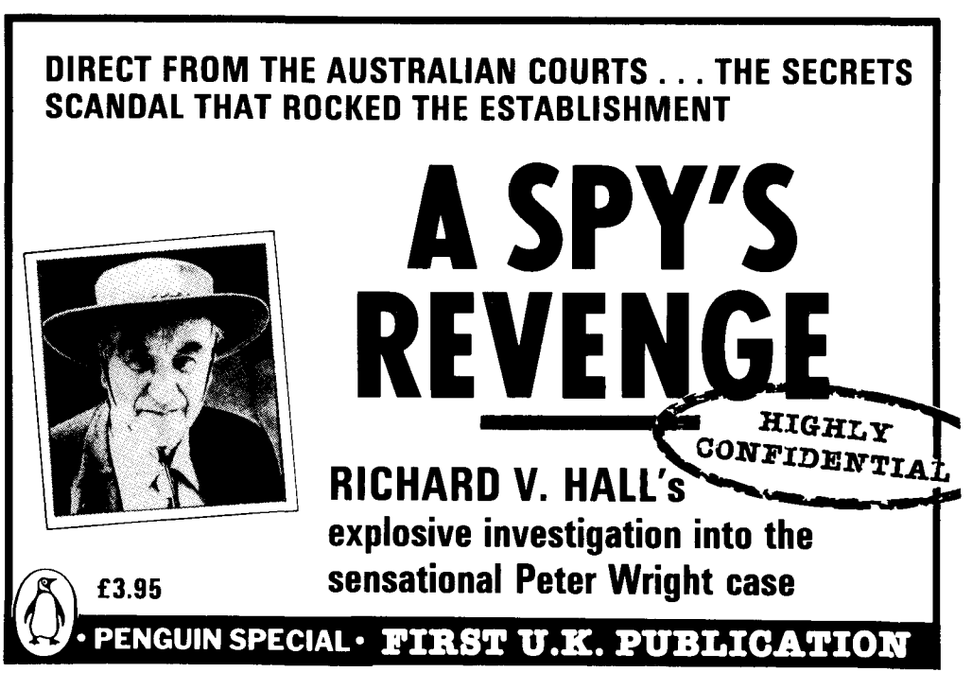
Nothing natural either in a Kenyan boy being forced to study 'The Seven Reasons Why We Won't Co-operate with the Church of Rome', a Protestant manual, in David Mulwa's **Master and Servant** (Longman, £3.95). The boy is sent into the care of a prosperous black trader's home, and to an English school during the last days of colonial rule. The boy finds relief from rigidity, a sense of politics and of beauty from the servant. A *Go-Between* type story develops as the servant drifts from the boy to the arms of his mistress. It's strong on adolescent sexuality, the boy's body an increasingly 'active participant' when certain topics are discussed. It's also an angry book, servants seen as dispensable as soap, lathered to nothing, angry too about the blacks who sold out and prospered under white rule.

Norma Kitson's autobiography **Where Sixpence Lives** (Hogarth, £4.50) begins gloriously with her father's complaint 'The moles are wrecking the tennis court again' and a snobbish mother insisting that 'they're all doing it overseas' to justify her fetish for purple décor in their Durban home. The mole turns out to be Norma, hiding her dolls, sensing her family dying, and in fact divorce is on the cards. Her father taught her about colonial oppression in fairy tale and parable, her brother encouraged her sense that girls were equal to boys. Norma grew up tough and determined never, like her mother, to be 'dependent as a baby'. Norma soon found her own voice, active, with her husband David, against apartheid, working for the ANC. She loathed white addiction to 'Drugs, sex, money, pornography' — a revealing remark.

One of the surprises in the book is that the mother changes, becomes supportive. But then her daughter was tortured at the hands of a man praising Shakespeare and Bach one day, beating her the next, her son-in-law sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment and a second daughter murdered. The closing chapters, the rows with London ANC over the unauthorised City Group non-stop picket, make depressing reading in an otherwise wholly heartening book.

First published in 1968, Ursula Zilinsky's **The Middle Ground** (GMP, £3.95) was remarkable at that time for both subject, a gay relationship in a German labour camp, and for being hopeful and positive about that relationship. A labour camp is run on concentration camp lines until a wounded Panzer officer, partly based on von Stauffenberg, takes over. A few details are unlikely: would the Commandant really risk a bookshelf of Wilde, Proust and Mann? His relative generosity, his using an inmate for sex, then falling for him are much more convincing. Zilinsky comes out against all 'the people who draw lines', though she never underestimates the dilemmas of compromise.

The ground around Poland and the Ukraine, where Jewish partisans fought the Nazis, is extraordinarily conveyed by the late Primo Levi in **If Not Now, When?** (Abacus, £3.95). With immense assurance Levi manages to convey the complexity of relations amongst a group of mostly Jewish resisters, Polish, Russian and German, usually with little background and sometimes no language in common. Unlikely alliances are forged, there is humour, sex and guile. In one


DIRECT FROM THE AUSTRALIAN COURTS . . . THE SECRETS SCANDAL THAT ROCKED THE ESTABLISHMENT
A SPY'S REVENGE
HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL
RICHARD V. HALL'S
explosive investigation into the sensational Peter Wright case
£3.95
• PENGUIN SPECIAL • FIRST U.K. PUBLICATION

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

glorious episode pumpkins are mounted on pylons successfully to confuse and delay a German advance. The immense catastrophe, a sense of Europe as one vast land of the dispossessed is brilliantly handled, as is the band's eventual arrival in the 'land of anarchic forbearance', Italy. At one point the story breaks: 'this story is not being told in order to describe massacres'; it is being told to assert struggle. The refrain of the partisans' song — 'If I'm not for myself, who will be for me?/If not this way, how? If not now, when?' — becomes more moving by the page.

The sick saga of the forged Hitler diaries is told with skill and wit by Robert Harris in **Selling Hitler** (Faber, £4.95). Journalists, editors, businessmen, academics and 'experts' of all kinds get egg on their faces. My only objection came early when Harris talks of the fascination of Hitler still, but declares that Hitler's 'beliefs died with him' — citing a 1983 West German government report estimating the number of active neo-Nazis at less than 2,000. As if the passive ones don't matter, nor the ones outside West Germany. But there is an irresistible comedy in the duping of so many notables, and he is ruthless in exposing Nazi fans, from the Marquess of Bath ('Hitler did a hell of a lot for his country') to the obsessed journalist Heidemann, protected for so long by layers of greed and gullibility quite equal to his own. □

PSYCHOTHERAPY

Loss adjustment

Ann Scott

Living with the Sphinx: Papers from the Women's Therapy Centre
ed. SHEILA ERNST and MARIE MAGUIRE *Women's Press* £5.95

FEMINIST THERAPY, feminist theory; psychoanalytic theory, therapeutic practice with women. Some observations about *Living with the Sphinx* are easy to put into words, some elusive, inchoate. In one way it is a book which reviews itself, for the editors are as aware as any reviewer would be of the tensions in establishing a debate and a practice which is not just psychoanalytic but respectful of feminist descriptions of the psychology of women.

The main concern for the authors is not, as one might at first think, the contested notion of unconscious mental process itself. As Sheila Ernst and Marie Maguire say in the Introduction: 'Those of us who came to work at the Women's Therapy Centre were implicitly taking up the question of how the unconscious might be related to the external world.' Moreover, in evocatively tracing relevant moments in the history of recent feminism — one being the growing awareness within Women's Refuge and Rape Crisis work in the 1970s that women's distress 'might have a logic and life of its own even though its roots lay in the violence and oppression women experience within society' (a lovely turn of phrase) — they bring us back to the WTC's sense of itself as both a feminist organisation and a part of a larger movement.

Thus the papers drawing on one-to-one therapy work tend to have a similar form. Sheila Ernst writes most lucidly about the daughter's psychological separation from her mother; Marie Maguire focuses carefully on the difficulty that women, including feminists, experience with envy, rivalry and competitiveness; and Mira Dana, in a lively piece whose title, 'Abortion — a woman's right to feel', refers back to the 1970s campaigning slogan 'A woman's right to choose', looks at the potential complexity of a woman's response to termination, even when it was what she wanted and chose. Each writer takes up an issue which feminism has looked at (or in some cases stayed silent about) and deepens the scope of the clinical picture by judicious but not uncritical use of psychoanalytic theory. Winnicott's concept of the transitional object, Klein's discussion of envy and Bowlby's work on loss and mourning inform these three papers respectively and, in most cases, there is a further discussion of the way in which the psychoanalytic descriptions themselves lack an understanding of women's experience in the culture *as* women.

Where one-to-one therapy is concerned, psychoanalytic thinking is being used to structure clinical observations, support a longer-term aim of psychic integration, and make suggestions about early infant-mother relationships. How close to the orthodox as an account of women's mental conflicts and their resolution does this come, when compared with a traditional analytic history? It *is* striking how resonant and familiar the language is on issues such as these, and it suggests that there may be no easy alternative to the clinical axiom, as presented here in Mira Dana's words in an observation on pregnancy as the product of unconscious conflict: 'The important point is to try to understand the unconscious motivation so that we are better able to act freely in our lives.'

On the other hand, the major area of disagreement at the level of theory in this collection is left undeveloped, and it's disappointing. For the two more general papers, one on separation and intimacy by Susie Orbach and Luise Eichenbaum, who founded the WTC in 1976, and the other by Vivien Bar on change in women, strike me as somewhat dissonant. Orbach and Eichenbaum have been putting forward the view for some years that feminist therapy offers 'a real experience of intimacy', 'an experience of consistent caring' and 'psychic restructuring' — and they return to this theme in the collection. By contrast Vivien Bar, gently exploring the work of Dorothy Dinnerstein and Juliet Mitchell and the possibility of a more Lacanian, fantasy-based account of the formation of the subject, believes that experiences of loss — as distinct from deprivation — are central to the personality, that the therapist is there to 'announce an absence' and that the idea of a 'nurturing therapist who can satisfy needs may reinforce a wish for an ideal

IF IT'S OUT OF PRINT
Our mail-order warehouse has over 100,000 titles in history, economics, politics, social-economic movements. Afro-Asian-Soviet-Latin American affairs, war, revolution, peace, black studies, feminism, trade unions, etc.
We buy libraries and collections on these subjects.
Phone 01-876 7254 or write (s.a.e. please)
Barnes High Street, London SW13 9LR
TRY HAMMERSMITH BOOKS
Since 1948 a world-wide mail order service

The day of the asterisk

Alan Brownjohn

The music stops in mid-bar on the PA,
So all the customers realise there was music
And wonder what comes now. 'Will Mrs Gurnard
Come to the Manager's office, will Mrs Gurnard
Come to the Manager's office. Thank you.' Click,
And the music starts again. Therefore she swivels
Round to tell Tamsin to stay with the cash desk,
And strides off smiling* down a glade of coats
To do the thing for which she has been thanked.
The customers themselves feel thanked for suffering
A remission of the music which they hardly
Knew they were hearing. This is the Summer Sale.

*She smiles at the girl on the cosmetics,
Penned in among the scents and paints and creams,
Who returns her a tanned and haggard look
Expensively reproaching anyone
Who passes, and will not be beautiful.
She smiles through the cafeteria swing doors,
And she smiles at Trevor with his agreements,
Imprisoned by some thirty capering screens.
At any second, somewhere in the world,
You can push a flat square button and get the sound
Of an audience screaming with happiness.
She pushes the bell for the Manager's happy smile.

Alan Brownjohn's new collection, The Old Flea Pit, *was published last month by Century Hutchinson.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mother and lead to the client taking on the therapist's views and beliefs as part of sustaining such an ideal'.

She is wise to raise these questions. Does the unconscious have its own laws, independent of such things as 'values' and 'beliefs'? What is the role of fantasy in feminist therapy? What does it mean for a client to be 'transformed', as Orbach and Eichenbaum believe happens — itself a much stronger claim for the impact of therapy than one often comes across? Susie Orbach either asked for or was given a right of reply, and it's a pity that her 'Note' on the article tends to foreclose the issue by restating some of the same themes as before, without turning to Vivien Bar's thoughts directly.

This hint of closure is perplexing, disturbing, not least because the collection is in other ways most open about the Centre's history. Carole Sturdy, in an exceptional article about the management dilemmas of a radical organisation, writes as one of the administrators. In a lucid, thoughtful piece on the ambiguous position of 'admin' as opposed to professional staff at the WTC, she looks squarely at the problems of autonomy, regrouping and redefinition facing an organisation once its charismatic founders have left. But I cannot help feeling that the collection itself now embodies a part of that tension. □

FICTION

Women in love

Diana Souhami

This Is Not for You
JANE RULE *Pandora* £4.50
On Strike Against God
JOANNA RUSS *Women's Press* £2.95

JANE RULE IS AN American writer in her fifties. The success of the movie *Desert Hearts* — based on her first novel — has led to the publishing of her work in the UK. She wrote **This Is Not for You**, her second book, in 1970. It, too, is about women in love.

This Is Not for You is clever and well-constructed, the style considered, humorous and intimate, the dialogue unique and believable. The theme is commitment withheld — not from indifference, but from fear and mixed feelings — and the oblique, paradoxical, highly uncommercial title reflects the central constraint of the story: 'With my nervous, negative morality, risking failure is less terrifying than risking success. I could more easily have died for you than lived with you and I know how ridiculous that is.'

This inner address is made by the narrator, Kate, to her *alter ego*, Esther. They first meet in college, get drunk together, argue about art, go bicycling in Spain, encounter each other's difficulties — Esther's vagueness, Kate's obsession with detail, Esther's fear of most adults, Kate's reluctance with strangers. A bonding occurs, so strong that subsequent relationships seem peripheral. Like Elizabeth Taylor, Jane Rule conveys how thwarted desire shapes the course of all that follows.

The hesitant lovers kiss once, which is as far as their lovemaking gets. Kate backs off — from a sense of the difference in weight between their respective temperaments. Esther has an incapacitating integrity, a childlike quality: 'O grow up E, was my standard retort, but you never did.'

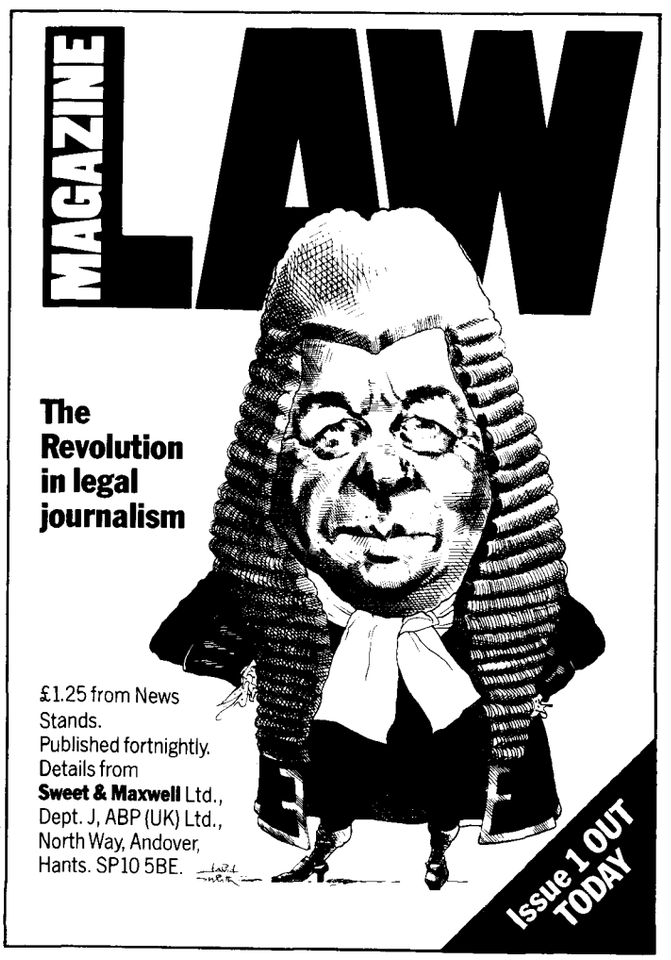
They move with their careers — Spain, London, Washington, Athens — sometimes apart, sometimes together, but always oddly parallel and never far from each other's minds. E picks up with a married man 'with frank and expressive enthusiasm for your tits, cunt, tail, in fact every four-letter part of you but your mind, which there had not, admittedly, been time to discover'. Kate has a similar affair with a married woman. 'She received all the fantasy, tenderness, desire, ease, I had refused you.' E marries an impotent man who knocks her about. Kate gets her nose broken by some dyke in Soho. Kate falls for a woman more worldly wise than she, who resists her in the same way as she in her turn resisted E. Kate pushes herself into work, E escapes into religion. It's a strange story compellingly told — restrained enough not to be mawkish and sincere enough not to jar. It disconcerts quite deeply; an extraordinary loneliness threads through it, exacerbated by the humour, wisdom and courage of the author's tone.

If *This is Not for You* gets its effect from implication, counterpoint, echo and nuance, **On Strike Against God** is a ghetto blast of a thing. The Esther of this story is a 38-year-old, divorced, New York teacher of English literature. She rails at God, or us, about all the inequities that bedevil women.

Aged twelve-and-a-half she had a crush on Danny Kaye. When married, she got little pleasure out of sex — she couldn't get into a comfortable position. She keeps company with atrociously insensitive men and understanding women who talk for six hours at a stretch. She admits to lusting after her friend Jean, who wears mauve, paisley, home-made dresses, lives in a housing co-op and studies maths. 'I was terribly frightened that sex would be just as bad with her as it had always been with a man.' Fortunately, on a quilt on Esther's living-room floor, fortified by a pound of ice cream and a bottle of wine and aided by a vibrator with spent batteries, they get into a comfortable position.

After which, understandably but to Esther's deep grief, Jean disappears. She crops up again some time later with a gun. They have satisfactory if tearful sex — three orgasms — and then, because Esther wants to be able to kill a man, they go into the yard and shoot at tin cans. Jean emigrates to New Zealand and Esther goes to a lesbian bar converted from an old garage and picks up a big, fat, low-income woman with a ducktail haircut.

At some point Esther declares herself to be a 'hopeless, happy neurotic feminist militant invert'. The prose — like much American fiction honed in their creative writing schools — has energy, anger, frankness, commitment and force and the book, which ends with a scarcely comprehensible plea for female solidarity, is mercifully short. □



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Black Section replies

Marc Wadsworth, National Chair, Labour Party Black Sections

The *New Statesman* is playing a destructive role these days on the question of oppression. In her article on us (*NS* 24 April) Sarah Benton erroneously contended 'The Black Section movement is now split down the middle'. Earlier, Peter Kellner (*NS* 17 April) wrote what amounted to a witch-hunter's charter, perpetuating distortions in particular about what Sharon Atkin is alleged to have said at our Birmingham meeting on 7 April. Kellner notably did not call for disciplinary action against those in the party who are blatantly advocating votes against official Labour Party candidates under the guise of 'tactical voting'. He evidently has a very narrow and discriminatory conception of whom disciplinary action might be taken against.

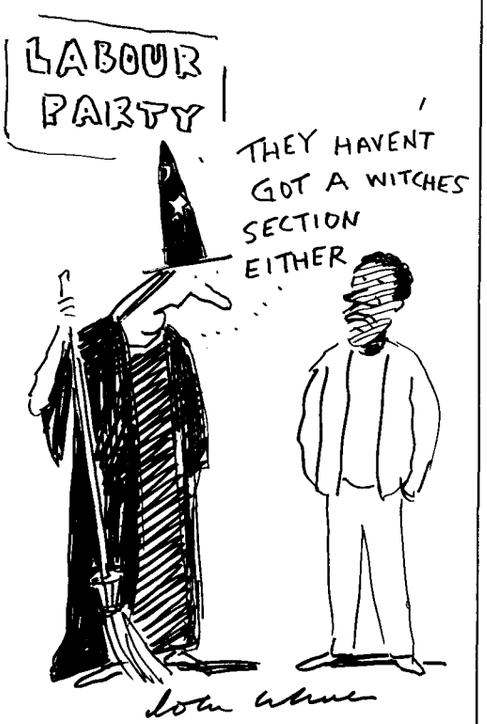
It is clear that the advancement of anti-racist Labour policies can only be achieved through constitutionally-guaranteed rights to representation for black members the same as those for trade unionists, women and youth in the party. To my knowledge, every single supporter of Black Sections, including those named by Benton in an attempt to divide us, continue to back this principle.

Both Kellner and Benton patronisingly claim the majority of black party members are not in favour of Black Sections. Where is their evidence? The London Weekend Television poll Kellner refers to has been widely discredited. 1. Because it was not conducted among black Labour supporters and; 2. Because it asked vaguely about whether or not respondents supported 'racially separate sections within parties'.

All we can accurately go on is the overwhelming support for Black Sections by the black press — surely reflective of their readership — and the 4-1 support among respondents to the NEC 'Positive Discrimination' Working Group's survey of the party in 1984.

As for Farrukh Dhondy (*NS* 24 April) his article displayed a good measure of hypocrisy when he regurgitated the *Race Today* posture about 'Black Sections for the middle class'. This is a bit rich coming from the once Black Power advocate turned highly-paid 'ethnic' commissioning editor for Channel Four. His rigid adherence to the 'line' has blinded him to our anti-racist, socialist policy demands widely publicised before and after the 14 March annual meeting in Nottingham. A case of selective amnesia on Dhondy's part, perhaps?

Scores of groups inside the party, like Women's Sections and Young Socialist branches, and outside make similar demands without the threat of disciplinary action or expulsion being used against them. Key white men in the labour movement sabotage the party's election chances and get off scot free. So all we can conclude is that what is being proposed against us is discriminatory.



Your publication should refuse to be a part of this and stop playing into the hands of those whose noxious brew of distortions and thinly-disguised racism has been eagerly picked up by a hostile media to witch-hunt Linda Bellos, Sharon Atkin and Birmingham City councillor Phil Murphy.

Linda Bellos, Treasurer, Black Sections

It is a pity that Peter Kellner did not ask or answer the question: why did Roy Hattersley and company leak the letter to *The Times*? As a recipient of the letter I can only say that it left me with no choice but to attend the meeting and clearly it does not matter to Peter Kellner or the rest of the press that Sharon Atkin and myself urged black people to vote Labour despite Labour's appalling record nationally on race issues. Instead he and others call for our expulsion. It looks remarkably like a witch-hunt to me, but one with worrying undertones. Black people can be in the party, so long as we keep quiet about racism. If on the other hand we formulate concrete proposals that will overcome racism in housing, education, immigration, policing, employment etc., we are accused of having an illegal manifesto.

As for the mechanisms for change, it is not a matter of Black Section members refusing to accept the verdict, but our determination to change the decision. That is how changes, including on the Ministry for Women, have been achieved. Peter Kellner is being disingenuous if he refuses to acknowledge this.

Because we are committed to the Labour Party we continue to work within it to change the constitution; it is not reckless to do so, but responsible and even consistent with the history of the party. But, of course, such minor matters were not raised by Kellner because he and others seem to be involved in a conspiracy to ensure that, in the words of Denis Howell, Black Sections do not 'alienate the host community'. Need I say more . . .

Education in Brent

Dr C. M. Posner, University of London Institute of Education, WC1

As one of the authors of 'The Two Kingdoms' Report, prepared by an independent team for the borough of Brent, to which he refers, I must make two observations on Tony Mooney's article (*NS* 20 March).

First, the report's conclusions about racism were not 'made' as Mr Mooney writes but were drawn from a considerable body of evidence collected from Brent parents. We would have had even more evidence had the Brent Teachers Association allowed us into schools. In any case in empirical research there is an important distinction between making conclusions and drawing conclusions from evidence. I therefore trust that Mr Mooney's statement is due to an unfortunate turn of phrase rather than unawareness of scientific method.

Second, Mr Mooney gives the impression that the report dealt only with racism. Nothing is further from the truth. The team's brief was to look at all aspects of secondary schooling in the borough with particular attention to racism. However, our main conclusions, not just those drawn from a chapter which deals specifically about racism, were that the educational problems facing children from Afro-Caribbean and Asian families are precisely those facing white working-class children, which I take is Mr Mooney's point. The proposals we make are intended for education of all children. I am disheartened with Mr Mooney's very selective and faulty reading.

However, I am not surprised that such readings are possible so long as the report is not widely available. Members of the team have been inundated with requests for the report which, right or wrong, is of major significance precisely for the reasons Mr Mooney points out. The main recommendations of the report are for greater involvement of teachers in the running of schools, greater participation in research and more involvement of parents in the school. However, despite repeated requests it is almost impossible to get one from the local authorities.

Marxism 87
A week of debates, lectures and discussion organised by the Socialist Workers Party
10-17 JULY
University of London Union
For further details and free brochure phone 01-538 3307 or write to Marxism 87, PO Box 82, London E3 3LH

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CLASSIFIED ADS: 01-739 1645

HOLIDAYS/TRAVEL

JOURNEY LATIN AMERICA. Low cost flights, holiday journeys, 3-6 weeks. JLA, 16 Devonshire Road, London W4 2HD. 01-747 3108. N49.30

SOUTHERN SPAIN. Self-contained apartment in old Olive Mill, 12 miles from coast. Unique, unspoilt setting, overlooking terraced river valley. Tel. 09276 6775. W17.1

TRIED THE REST, now try the best. For low air fares to world-wide destinations inc. Africa. SHL, 313A Hoe St, London E17. 01-520 7911. N50.16

VILLA at sea's edge. Trogir (near Split), sleeps 6, £250 per week. Box (16)4826. W16.1

FRENCH PYRENEES

Explore the spectacular countryside of the Hautes Pyrénées. Wonderful walking, friendly pension, hot summers!

Colour Brochure: 01-693 9789 (24 hrs)

borderline

FORGET THE GREAT FREEZE. PLAN A WARM, HAPPY SUMMER HOLIDAY AT ABOUT HALF THE COMMERCIAL COST

LAKE BALATON & BUDAPEST £160 23-31 May

VENICE, VERONA & DOLOMITES . . . £165 22-31 May, 21-30 Aug., 28 Aug.-6 Sept., 4-13 Sept., 11-20 Sept., 18-27 Sept.

YUGOSLAV RIVIERA (Dubrovnik) £185 23 May-4 June **£170** 30 Sept.-12 Oct.

NORWEGIAN CITIES & FJORDS. £185 23-31 May See **Oslo, Bergen, Sognfjord and Jostedal Glacier**

BERLIN, DRESDEN, LEIPZIG 13-24 July & 3-14 Aug. **£165** Includes **full board & programme**

VILNIUS £295 (Capital of Lithuania). . . . 14-25 June

PRAGUE £180 . . . 20-30 July, 10-20 Aug., 31 Aug.-10 Sept., 14-24 Sept.

MOSCOW (By sleeper train) **£245** . . . 13-22 July, 27 July-5 Aug., 3-12 Aug., 17-26 Aug., 24 Aug.-3 Sept., 7-16 Sept., 21 Sept-3 Oct.

LENINGRAD (By sleeper train) **£245** . . . 20-30 July, 10-20 Aug., 31 Aug.-10 Sept., 14-24 Sept.

ZAKOPANE & CRACOW £200 . . . dates as **Leningrad**

BERLIN for **MAYDAY** (by air) **£149** . . . 30 April-3 May

ULAN BATOR £350 By sleeper train (**MONGOLIA**) 17 Aug.-3 Sept.

ALBANIA 30 Sept.-12 Oct. **£250** with **full board in 1st class hotel**

YORKSHIRE TOURS 49 Thornton Lodge Road, Huddersfield HD1 3JQ
Phone (0484) 24269

APPOINTMENTS

TRADES UNION CONGRESS
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

A vacancy exists for AN ASSISTANT in this department whose work includes *the preparation of documents etc. on industrial relations, trade union structure, manpower policy, equal opportunities and local government, and representational duties.*

Applications are invited from persons with a commitment to trade unionism and relevant experience and/or qualifications.

The salary scale rises in **five annual steps** from **£11,985-£15,741** (including **London Weighting**).

If you are interested in this vacancy please write quoting reference IR2 for further details and an application form to:

The General Secretary, Trades Union Congress, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS.
Closing date: 15 May 1987

The TUC is an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcomes applicants regardless of sex, disability, marital status, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.

Planning and Economic Development Department
TRAINING ADVISER – RACE
£15,600 - £16,365

Can you respond to a challenge?

We are seeking someone committed to work for an Anti-Racist Department providing services to a Borough with large Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities.

You will work within a specialist training unit, the major aims of this post being to identify the training needs of black people in the Borough and to monitor and initiate training policies and projects aimed at meeting their needs in order to improve their employment prospects.

Experience of working in an inner city multi-racial area is essential. Management and training experience in the public and voluntary sectors is desirable.

Closing date: 20.5.87 **Ref: 085 (A) PED**

Application forms obtainable from the Personnel Office, Room A/204, Town Hall Annexe, New Broadway, Ealing W5 2BY. Tel: 01-840-1995 (24 hour service). Please quote appropriate reference.

Ealing's new Council welcomes applications from all regardless of sex, race, ethnic origin, responsibility for dependants, from people with disabilities and from lesbians and gay men.

Ealing

Researcher

Granada Television is looking for a Researcher to work on a documentary film about the Soviet Union.

Fluent Russian and a thorough knowledge of Soviet social and political structures are essential.

Experience of journalistic work in USSR is desirable and the successful candidate will be required to travel to the Soviet union. Employment will be offered on a short term, 4 month contract starting in July and will be London based.

Written applications quoting reference number A96 to:
Mandy Patchett
Personnel Manager
Granada Television Ltd
Quay Street
Manchester M60 9EA
by 8 May 1987

GRANADA TELEVISION
An equal opportunity employer

CITY SELECTION, 157-159 Whitecross Street, London EC1Y 8JL. 01-253 0055. We have many opportunities for secretaries/pas, wps, clerks and receptionists in a wide variety of interesting jobs — both temp and perm. PAYMENT SAME WEEK! N24.3

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey. OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345. N49.34

SOCIAL ISSUES GROUP of Reform Synagogues of Great Britain requires Part-Time Co-Ordinator, 8 hours weekly, to help generate a programme of action on specific matters of current, social and ethical concern and to assist in the collection of Studies and Reports and Jewish source material. Apply for job specification: The Manor House, 80 East End Road, Finchley, N3 2SY. Tel: 01-349 4731 ext. 138. W18.1

Please mention
NEW STATESMAN
when replying
to advertisements

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YOUNG MUSIC MAKERS

WANTED – dedicated **ADMINISTRATOR** who enjoys music to run YMM a Saturday Music Centre for children in NW3. **Organisational ability & liking for children, parents & teachers essential.** Musical expertise *not* essential. Approximately **600 hours per annum incl. 10 Saturday mornings each school term.** Ideal for efficient & tactful parent looking for part-time work mainly at home.

Salary by negotiation.

Write: **Francis Oeser, 21 Dartmouth Park Avenue, London NW5 (01-267 6344)** *with* CV & *informal letter* giving details of what you feel the job requires that you can provide.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

LGIU

The Local Government Information Unit works to promote the positive case for local government and disseminate information on local government issues on behalf of over 60 local council affiliates and national trade unions.

The Unit requires a **Deputy Director** to assist **the Director** in the efficient running of this Unit of 16 staff. The job includes **co-ordination of specific policy areas in the Unit's work programme, some media work in liaison with the press officer and overall responsibility for the information system.**

The successful candidate will understand the current issues facing local authorities and their trade unions, have knowledge/experience of running public information campaigns, show an ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally and to manage and motivate staff and want to work as part of a team. S/he will also demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunities.

Salary Scale: **£16,776** rising to **£17,916** p.a. (PO6) plus **£1,395 London Weighting.**

Closing date for applications: **19 May 1987.**

For further details/application form, please contact:
The Administrator, LGIU, 2nd Floor, 1/5 Bath Street, London EC1V 9QQ.

LGIU is working towards becoming an equal opportunity employer.

Town Clerk's

MAGAZINE EDITOR

PO2 £12,555/£13,653 Ref: TC4Y

PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION

Required to work with another person to produce "The Manchester Magazine" — a monthly publication which strives to be both interesting and informative.

You will become familiar with the policies of the Council and be willing and able to reflect these in a way which would be readily understood by the vast majority of Manchester residents. You should have, or develop, a wide range of contacts with people in the community and also with officers and elected members of the Council.

Duties include co-ordination of copy, pictures and other material for each edition and writing of articles for inclusion in the magazine.

A working knowledge of the laws of libel and the Representation of the Peoples' Act is needed and you will be expected to become familiar with the Local Government Act 1986.

No specific educational/professional qualification or training is required but experience of writing under pressure and an ability to meet deadlines is essential. A knowledge of magazine or newspaper layout is also *required.*

THIS POST IS AVAILABLE FOR JOB SHARE

Application form and job descriptions from: **The Town Clerk's Staff Office, P.O. Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 2LA. Tel. 061-234 3077.** Closing date: **15 May.**

The City Council operates a Union Membership Agreement under which a new employee is required to become a member of a recognised trade union.

MANCHESTER
City Council
Defending Jobs - Improving Services

Manchester City Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and we positively welcome applications from women and men, regardless of their racial, ethnic or national origin, disability, age up to 65, sexuality or responsibilities for dependants.

STRATEGIES FOR A GREAT CITY

The London Strategic Policy Unit is developing new and integrated approaches on economic policy, transport, planning, race equality, women's equality, policing and recreation and arts.

Throughout this work is a challenge to heterosexism, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. Applicants will require commitment to, and relevant experience, in implementation of equal opportunities strategies.

LONDON STRATEGIC POLICY UNIT

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

£21,630 – £23,613 inc. LW

This senior post combines overall management of the Unit's resources with co-ordination of policy development and research. The management role has a particular emphasis on staffing and industrial relations, financial management and related issues. The post-holder will assist the Director in the development of strategic policies in the relevant policy areas, with an emphasis on integrated work and equalities issues, working closely with borough Councillors.

You will have: substantial general management experience at a senior level in the public or voluntary sector; a successful track record of policy development in one or more fields of major urban policy, experience of implementing equal opportunity policies; high level of communication skills; sensitivity to, and understanding of, the policies of the member borough councils.

HEAD OF ECONOMIC POLICY GROUP

£18,708 – £20,220 inc. LW

The Economic Policy Group (EPG) takes a strategic London-wide view of economic policy issues and access to jobs and training, working to combat unemployment and inequality and promoting the democratic control of economic activity in London.

The group head is responsible for developing and directing the work of the EPG's 54 professional and support staff in three priority areas; job generation, labour market issues and the development/improvement of borough services, with equalities issues being integral to each.

Ability to develop and direct this work, and communicate effectively at senior levels, is needed, together with at least 3 years experience of economic policy development, experience of implementing equalities strategies in your work, and proven ability to manage multi-disciplinary teams.

LSPU staff are employed by the London Borough of Camden which is an equal opportunity employer. You will be considered on the basis of your suitability for the post, with equal opportunities for women, black and other ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities, regardless of marital status, age, creed, religion and unrelated criminal conviction. All posts are open for job sharing. For blind and partially sighted persons, the relevant information and application forms are available on tape.

Details and application forms can be obtained from:
The Director, LSPU, Middlesex House, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SB
and must be returned by **20 MAY 1987.**

Interviews will be held on **28 and 29 MAY 1987.**

FINANCIAL

SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, London W1. For written quote apply: Tel: 01-734 1974. N49.39

GENERAL

SERVICES

QUALITY TYPING English, German, French. Moderate charges. Anne Shotts: 01-452 6617. N49.27

CONFERENCE FACILITIES

NEED A VENUE
for your meeting/conference?
Special rates for charities/educational groups. Comprehensive, economical facilities in WC1. Meeting rooms, catering and bars, audio-visual. Contact: **Amanda Rumley, University of London Union, Malet Street, WC1. 01-580 9551.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HEARTSEARCH

41 YEAR-OLD professional Englishman, single, thoughtful and considerate, with wide interests, seeks a caring woman for a serious relationship. London/South. Box (17)4857. W17.9

ATTRACTIVE MALE graduate (23), living in Hants, interests: weight-training, jogging, travel, cinema, eating o:it — seeks sensitive female for friendship/permanent relationship. Photo appreciated. Box (17)4842. W17.11

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL man, (61), of warm friendly disposition, needs similar woman (slim/medium, age 40-60 approx.) for enjoyable friendship and outings. London & surrounds. Box (18)4880. W18.3

ACTIVE MAN, 61, London arts orientated, seeks youthful, attractive woman, around 50, for foreign trekking holidays and other mutually rewarding activities. Box (18)4875. W18.4

BEAUTIFUL ORIENTAL Girls wish to contact gentlemen for friendship, love and marriage. Please send s.a.e. for further details of this serious programme to: Miss S. Ounban, P.O. Box 39, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8YX. W7.16

CARING PROFESSIONAL man, 39, tall, slim, unattached, varied interests — theatre, cinema, arts, sport, life in general — seeks sincere, cultured lady looking for stable, long-term relationship. North London/Essex area. Box (17)4863. W17.12

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating. Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011. N49.20

ENERGETIC, AFFECTIONATE male graduate, 41 — interests include: literature, science, classical music, jazz, walking — seeks intelligent and affectionate feminine woman, 25-40, with similar interests. Letter and photograph appreciated. Cambridge area. Box (17)4835. W17.13

EX-BALLET DANCER/social worker needs man, fiftyish, intelligent, amusing, affectionate. I'm small, fair, attractive, artistic. Aim: To share future. No smokers, husbands, chauvanists. Please write: Box (17)4844. W17.14

FEMALE, 38, warm, caring, graduate, anti-sexist, pretty, 5' 6", likes: wining/dining, cinema, theatre, opera, country walking, dislikes: sport, pubs — seeks affectionate male, 36-43, for mature, intense, mutually-caring, lasting relationship. E. London. Box (18)4873. W18.5

FRIENDLY FEMALE maverick, Guardian reader, Radio 3 listener, French/German speaker, cosmopolitan, travelled, radical, multifarious interests, working, seeks debonair, intelligent, reflective, youthful man (over 59) with savoir-vivre, for friendship, weekend companionship. London. Telephone no please. Box (18)4883. W18.6

GRADUATE ENGINEER, 29, ex-naval officer, creative, Christian principles; interested in art, music, theatre, writing, travel, wishes to marry gentle, educated, humorous girl and have children. Box (17)4840. W17.15

HOW DARES WINS. Englishman, 47, self-employed, slim, enjoys most things particularly music and countryside, seeks stimulating lady to share the occasional day with — and counter stale marriage. London/Home Counties. Box (18)4876. W18.7

LIFE AFFIRMING London woman, smokes (occasionally), drinks (socially), multifarious interests, radical, seeks warm, intelligent, reflective man of mature years who needs a friend. Box (18)4881. W18.8

MAN, 39, seeks good-humoured woman, to take part in drinking contests. No prizes — its just for fun. Reading, Berks. Box (16)4818. W16.10

OLD FRIENDS

DOES LIFE BEGIN AT 40?

MARRIAGE, FRIENDSHIP or COMPANIONSHIP:
the introduction agency for the 40s, 50s, & 60s

Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, N5 2DB
Telephone: 01-226 5432

DRAWING DOWN THE MOON

The alternative introduction agency for thinking people.

Everyone seen personally. For your free consultation or brochure phone Mary Balfour on 01-938 1721.

7-11 Kensington High Street, London W8 5NP. Open till 8pm and Weekends.

NEEDED VERY much man 50, intelligent, interesting, affectionate, solvent, humorous, non-smoker. I'm attractive, lively, talented, enjoy life & profession, but wish to share future. Please write Box (18)4879. W18.9

OUT OF TOWN weekends near Cambridge. Lonely male, young 50, slim, own business — interests: horses, racing, games (e.g. backgammon), dog walking. Works hard, seeks slim, warm, attractive, caring, weekend lady's company — hopefully long-term. Box (18)4869. W18.10

SENSITIVE, ACADEMIC, male, 39, seeks a woman who enjoys travelling, walking, theatre, Radio 4, weekends away, music and sex, to share interests as friend and lover. Scotland. Box (17)4841. W17.24

SHORT, MALE graduate engineer, 35, adrift after demise of previous relationship, seeks a loving, petite lady with interests in walking, travel and the arts. Yorkshire/North West area. Box (16)4816. W16.14

SINGLE PARENT/TEACHER 37, slim, attractive, seeks male preferably tallish, 35-45, possibly single parent, for friendship, walks, cinema etc. Photo please. South Yorks/anywhere. Box (18)4867. W18.11

SPRING HAS SPRUNG so meet someone new. For introductions to thinkers who do, write to Flora Handley at The Odyssey Bookshop, 30 Lambs Conduit Street, WC1N 3LE or phone 01-509 2690. W18.12

TRUSTWORTHY male friend, 30-39, sought by socialist feminist female, 30, with view to long-term partnership. My interests include: history, peace, music, theatre, cinema, walking, cycling and cats. Photo appreciated. London/Herts. Box (18)4872. W18.13

UNATTACHED! JOIN CLAN. London wide social club for professional people, 35 plus. Interesting events, varied venues. For two months free introductory membership, send two s.a.e. Box (16)4813. W16.15

WIDOWER, RETIRED, professional, presentable, sense of humour, many interests, attractive, and still learning, seeks slimmish female for constructive, caring relationship, with commitment. Box (18)4874. W18.14

WOMAN 27, professional, left-wing, vegetarian, slim, attractive, enjoys cinema, theatre, rock music, dancing seeks man. London area. Phone no essential, photo appreciated. Box (18)4868. W18.15

WOMAN, 43, attractive, slim, interests in politics, philosophy, environment, natural science, cinema, photography, music, love for animals, wild creatures and places, gardening, vegetarian cooking, seeks kind, intelligent man, not necessarily all same interests, for conversation, happy times, maybe lasting relationship. London. Box (18)4870. W18.16

PURSUITS

FEMALE 30, seeks companion for holiday to Moscow and Leningrad, second half of July 1987. Box (18) 4871. W18.2

LEISURE

BRIGHTON. Cheap & cheerful B&B (self-catering). Warm & friendly. Ideal residential conferences. Sleeps 17 + . Vegetarian & non-smoking. Details: The Only Alternative Left, 39 St Aubyn's, Hove, BN3 2TH. (0273) 24739. W14.4

AWARDS

AIREY NEAVE MEMORIAL TRUST
RESEARCH AWARDS
Write a book on
Freedom under National Laws.
Closing date for completed applications, **30 June 1987.**
Send s.a.e. for forms to Hon. Secretary (NS)
AIREY NEAVE MEMORIAL TRUST,
HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON SW1

BOOKS/ PUBLICATIONS

ECONOMICS COLLECTIONS BOUGHT. Also review copies, Politics, History, Sociology, ECONOMISTS' BOOKSHOP, Secondhand Dept. Ring for appointment. 01-405 8643. N49.26

FOR THE DISCERNING READER new and secondhand books at Adelaide Book Centre (beside Cranks) Adelaide Street, London WC2 (opp Charing Cross BR Stn.). W11.4

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermillion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822. N49.24

Keep up to date on
CENTRAL AMERICA
with
CENTRAL AMERICA BRIEFINGS
A monthly news digest on six countries using Central American sources
Politics, economy, human rights, labour movement, etc.
£25 insts., £20 individuals, £10 concess.
Central America Information Service, 1 Amwell Street, London EC1R 1UL

MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlet, book list, programme. Free talks or discussions, Sundays 8-9pm ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL. N40.6

BILLBOARD

Enquiries: Laura Berryman 01-739 1645

Theatre

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252 Olivier (open stage) **ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA, SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR.** Lyttelton (proscenium stage) **THE MAGISTRATE.** Cottesloe (small auditorium) **ROSMERSHOLM.** See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

BLOOMSBURY THEATRE 01-387 9629. 8, 9 May 7pm **NATIONAL OPERA STUDIO.** Sun 10 May 7.30pm **CHOU CHOU DANCE CO.**

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY 01-628 8795/638 8891. **BARBICAN THEATRE: RICHARD II** 30 April-7 May, **MACBETH** 8-12 May, **ROMEO & JULIET** 13-14 May. **THE PIT: WORLDS APART** by José Triana 30 April-7 May. **COUNTRY DANCING** by Nigel Williams 8-12 May.

MERMAID THEATRE 01-236 5568. **FAIR MAID OF THE WEST** by Thomas Heywood 30 April-12 May. **EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR** by Ben Jonson 13-14 May. **THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN** by Shakespeare & Fletcher from 20 May.

Exhibition

"PAST HISTORIC — FUTURE PERFECT?" Margaret Glover's paintings, sketches from life recording those who work for a better world. Julius Nyerere, Dora Russell, LP and CND conferences, Quakers etc. 28 April-30 May (opening times variable). Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. (01-242 8032/3). Free.

AGENDA

FOR DETAILS CALL JANET BANKS 01-739 1645

Deadline: 2pm Mondays

CAMPAIGN

DEPRESSED BY THE OPINION POLLS? Tactical Voting can deny the Thatcher Government a third term. Help TV 87 to inform voters (Alliance & Labour) how to make their votes count. Send donation to Tactical Voting, 61 Sotheby Road, London N5 2UP. (Send s.a.e. for information about campaign or ring 01-354 0823).

SAT 2 MAY

THE OTHER ECONOMIC SUMMIT: Teach-in on the Brundtland Report on Environment and Development. Speakers include: Arif Hasan (Pakistan), George McRobie (ITDG), Norman Myers, Monica Opole (Kenya), Madhu Sarin (India) and Des Wilson (FoE Int.). Workshops 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Regent's College, Regent's Park, London NW1. Tickets £7 (£4 unwaged). Disabled access: S. Further details 01-627 4760.

MON 4 MAY

LONDON HISTORY WORKSHOP SEMINAR. Madge Dresser 'Black and White on the Buses: the 1963 Colour Bar in Bristol'. at The White Swan, 14 New Row, WC2, 7.30 p.m.

SAT 9 MAY

ONE WORLD Conference Wales, Transport House, Cardiff 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Speakers: Glenys Kinnock, Win Griffiths MEP; Stuart Holland MP; Joan Ruddock; Joan Lestor; Ian Spence. Discussion, video. £2 incl. lunch. Details: Dawn Griffiths, 13 Adare Street, Bridgend, Glamorgan. 0656 645490 or 01-806 0467.

TUES 12 MAY

'CENTRAL LONDON LAG' "Child Care — The Role of the Guardian-Ad-Litem". Speakers: Ms Naomi Angell, Solicitor (Bindmans), Ms Ann Buckley, Guardian-Ad-Litem. Ye Olde Cock Tavern (upstairs), 22 Fleet Street, EC4, 7 p.m.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BACKCHAT

OUT TO LUNCH

Nunc dimittis

Andrew Lumsden

LUCK IS dropping my acquaintance.

Last week my £400 Christian Dior watch, for which Felix gave £8 in Bangkok, gave up. And then, angrily listening to the absurd, smug BT voice which says 'the time is being brought to me by Accurist', I dropped the receiver at home from such a height that all its innards fell out. It *kind* of works if I stuff all the pieces back in just *such* a way.

Every time I inhale I'm frightened an ethereal voice will tell me it's courtesy of British Oxygen; and I'll read that Tory MPs over-subscribed.

I ought to be staying in in case BT wants to call, and I wish I had. On Sunday a male stripper and an independent TV producer (two different people) told me to stop whining and come out and see *Personal Services*, which sounds exactly what my watch and my phone are in need of.

But they tell me it's a movie about sex. 'Tell me' because, on the Central to Tottenham Court Rd, my specs fell out of my pocket and I left them on the seat; or they were snitched. Giving up on the film, the three of us retreated to the YMCA lounge. They discussed the jocks with the damp hair. I stared at fitful blurs of no — to me — discernible gender or even species. Prescription chastity, as you might say, had I been on the toot. Watch, phone, glasses in short order: someone, I sulkily said to myself, is trying to tell me something.

That I have a communications problem, I imagine: no time of day, a wrong number more often than not, and poor vision. Once, long ago, I won a footrace in Las Vegas against Clement Freud. *He* I suppose would tell me in the name of his distinguished ancestor: 'You're subconsciously contriving excuses to withdraw from a too-harsh world'. Could be, could be.

A loutishly unintelligent 'review' of gay rights and the Labour party on LWT (for those of us who can make out what's on the screen) followed by ex-MP Brian Walden and ex-PM James Callaghan on C4 colluding to usher gays politely back to the closet. I truly don't much care for the real life now on offer.

I've made my mind up: I'm leaving.

I was still asleep in a roomscape of dripping watch and telephone like a Dali landscape when, at 7.30 a.m. today, the PO summoned me on the doorbell (still working!) to take delivery of a present, a book posted from Cambridge by Alison. *Black Athena* by Martin Bernal, Vol 1 of the author's effort to redress the graceless Euro-American denial of the debt owed by Greece, Rome and the Religions of the Book to non-whites: to Afro-Asia. Tucking it under my arm, I'm leaving by the first cheap Virgin tour for ancient Greece.

I'll join the boyish Socrates in hunting up Parmenides ('the first to say that the earth is spherical' — Diogenes Laertius) as he arrives for the 'all-Athens' festival of c.450 BC with his lover Zeno, he of the paradoxes such as 'Achilles and the tortoise'.

Sharing watered wine from a wickedly decorated two-handled cup (such as Britain's latest law would smash), I'll lounge in the stoa under a westering sun while the town youth including Socrates cross-question two visiting gays (such as Britain would evict from education) about their proposition that the world is round.

I'll hear Parmenides and Zeno praise Africa as fount of science and thought. Then I'll go in silent sympathy to c.400 BC and hand in flowers to the young Plato, tank-like in build, as he sits by his dead lover Aster:

> You were the morning star among the living:
> But now in death your evening lights the dead

I'm not deluded that all was perfect then — far, far from it. But I don't know how much more of our time I can bear.

On 11 April, in this real world of ours, I went to the memorial gathering for Mark Ashton, of Lesbians & Gays Support the Miners, suddenly dead in his 20s of Aids. Somerville sang. And I'm losing my faculties one by one. □

THE WORLD'S MOST LUXURIOUS HOTEL

is without question the Imperial Majestic Palace, situated on the west side of London's elegant Berkeley Square. The entrance is modest and discreet, to avoid attracting foreign tourists or the sort of people who come up for the Horse of the Year Show. The accommodation comprises thirty individual suites, each one of which has its own heated swimming pool. Room service is instantaneous, since every suite has a fully staffed kitchen (with fine provisions supplied by Chisholm and Pagett of Pall Mall) and every guest is assigned a butler and personal maid or valet. Should you leave your shoes outside your bedroom door upon retiring, they will be replaced with a brand new pair, and not merely cleaned as is the practice in less salubrious establishments. There are no electric kettles, inviting guests to make their own instant breakfast coffee, and there are none of those miniature bars that require you to fill in a fiddly little form, confessing how much you've had to drink. Instead, each suite has a vast and generously stocked cabinet where you will find, among other delights, a bottle or two of chilled Merrydown Vintage Cider. Merrydown uses only fine English apples like Bramleys and Cox's in its fermentation, rather than the bitter little cider apples used in those brands which you find in hotels which expect you to carry your own luggage. Merrydown may also, of course, be enjoyed in private houses, as well as an increasing number of public ones.

Merrydown. Cider for the few.

WINE

Wizards of Oz

Stephen Brook

FEW WOULD DISPUTE that the greatest white grape varieties are Riesling and Chardonnay but, when planted outside Germany, Riesling rarely matches the quality of the native variety. This has not proved so with Chardonnay, the grape from which white Burgundy is made. It has not only fruitiness and richness of flavour but, when well made, a complexity which puts most other white grapes in the shade. Californians and Australians have discovered that Chardonnay thrives in their vineyards and I thought it was time to round up the majority of currently available Australian Chardonnays and submit them to a thorough blind tasting.

The prospect of tasting solo 40 alcoholic white wines at a sitting proved too much, so I enlisted the help of three experienced wine merchants, including Alex Findlater, a specialist in Australian wines. For three hours we battled with the bottles and the results were rewarding. It was soon clear that the general standard was high, few wines were downright poor (unlike my experience at a subsequent tasting that included a line of expensive white Burgundies) and a certain

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

monotony even set in as wine after wine revealed almost identical qualities of cleanness, citric fruitiness, oakiness, good balance.

We also tired of the technical proficiency of the Australian winemakers, in the form of excessive spritz (carbon dioxide) and tacked-on acidity. Such features created an impression of artificiality, of laboratory wine-making, though I suspect this irks the professional taster more than the consumer.

The outstanding wines included the 1984 Balgownie (Bow Wine Vaults, £9.40), which triumphed with its sheer elegance. Here's a wine to make the Burgundians cower! The 1984 Petaluma (Amis du Vin, £9.50) had similar qualities and, though it did not show exceptionally well at this tasting, previous tasting notes allow me to single out Petaluma for its elegance and lovely oakiness. Other similarly priced wines that pleased us almost as much were the 1985 Bowen and 1985 Simon Whitlam.

Fortunately, there are cheaper bottles that offer first-rate wines: 1984 Richard Hamilton (£7.50), 1985 Krondorf (£6.50), 1985 Ch. Reynella (£5) and 1985 Hill-Smith (£5). Of this batch the Krondorf and Ch. Reynella were outstanding, impeccably made wines of character and finesse that didn't exhaust their interest after a single sip. I greatly liked the 1986 Seaview, a fresh wine of little complexity but great dash and vigour, and irresistibly priced (Oddbins/Gough, £3.49).

A dozen wines won good marks and ranged in styles from the charming Rothbury (Amis du Vin, £6) to the lush, almost overblown De Bortoli (£5.50) — which, while undoubtedly individual, lacked a recognisable Chardonnay character. Among pricey wines we admired the oaky 1985 Lindeman's Padthaway (£9), the creamy elegant 1985 Tyrrell Vat 47 (£9) and the well-balanced 1985 Brown Brothers Victorian (Majestic, £7.99). Good value at between £4.75 and £6.50 were the powerful 1985 Berri, the pineappley 1985 Hardy Padthaway (H. Allen Smith, £5.35), the slightly sweet 1985 Hunter, the aromatic 1986 Seppelt, the spicy, stylish 1985 Mildara Coonawarra.

The palate-weary tasters were more or less agreed about the above selection, but other wines which I liked met with dissenting views. These included the attractively fruity 1986 Leo Buring (£4.50), the slightly clumsy but inexpensive Orlando (Oddbins/Gough, £3.99), the lean but vivid 1985 Tisdall Mt Helen (£8) and the 1984 Katnook, which didn't justify its high price (£10). I was alone in liking an expensive Show Reserve, the 1984 Montrose, and alone in faulting the blowsiness of the 1985 Renmano (£5). Alex Findlater batted alone for the 1986 Mildara Church Hill (£5).

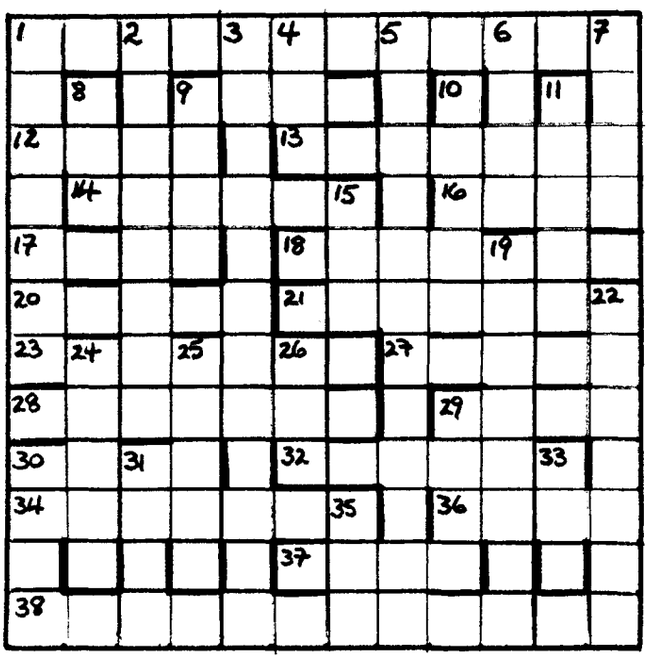
Such differences of opinion confirm the subjectivity of wine tasting. Nevertheless it was clear to all that many bottles offered invigorating and sometimes brilliant wine at fair prices. It is of course misleading to speak of *Australian* Chardonnay as though a whole continent were merely one strip of vineyards. Inevitably, with vineyards spread over many regions with differing climates and soils, not to mention the foibles of individual winemakers, there is a tremendous range of styles available, from fresh youthful wines to bottles that rival authentic white Burgundies. Whether they will age as superbly is more doubtful. □

Suppliers: *Many wines are widely available, but others are only imported in minute quantities. For these wines, consult the specialists: Alex Findlater, 77 Abbey Rd, NW8 (01-624 7311), and Ostlers, 63a Clerkenwell Rd, EC1 (01-250 1522).*

Salamanca 120

'N & O'

PRIZES: £12 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 120, New Statesman, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8BA, by first post 1 June.



All answers have been adjusted before clueing except one. *Study* of the grid should expose the odd-one-out for solvers to indicate. The reason for the omissions as and when they occur is displayed by two diagonals.

Name_____

Address_____

_____

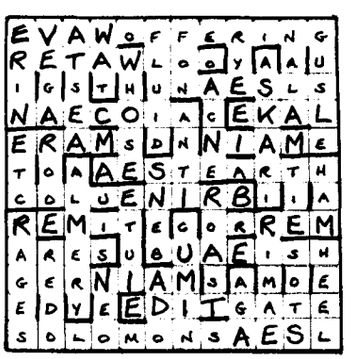
(N) ACROSS

1 If this is unfavourable there could be a stormy time ahead (the error we had one time in composing!)
9 Always the last one to get the money?
12 The last one always getting the eye
13 Dress badly? With this, you'ld have no conception
14 A withered flower, on the inside a touch nearly like felt
16 Make new sheets from old? (Feint rule?)
17 Rag: one in press
18 Crack here and I'd see translation?
20 An alloy, as 'twere?
21 Loafer in scrape having anticipation of objections
23 Once more lay on spread or see I'm tucking in
27 Something for the head: a comb, perhaps
28 Teasels one's seen in circular image
29 Crowned — and uncrowned — this tops
30 Plaster given a half wind
32 Starts book again, rambling Norse epic (not illustrated)
34 Croaky? Fourth of annatto's leads
36 Who suffers long, not totally inactive
37 Lacking bridges
38 Lorry is in best shape, not initially treated thus?

(O) DOWN

1 One who'll flatter cyclist
2 Glandular inflammation: a chap has it internally
3 These curves may be traced by short icy hoop rolling
4 Think in 35 you'll spot a person
5 Chemicals in a closed chain burn composing mixture without boron
6 Grandpa e.g. short or lean
7 Where 'e should go, in anger Mac's informed?
8 Boss-man's one
9 A monarch, not very old, showing *some* new stitches?
10 Centre of leaf, edge curling up round centre point
11 Pot, one with lines round underside edges
15 Active spy, last to lead
19 Man turning up with girl in The Ferret to have a friendly drink together
22 What Martians brought to our planet Earth disastrously? Indeed!
24 Girl Queen in Ireland
25 When fabricated these, even in Peru, are found in the scheme of things (2 words)
26 No longer deaf, that's most certain
29 Foreign money that's rise among State workers?
30 Like a strong smoke? Here's cigar burning, middle bit gone
31 Fruit, round, brimming with sugar
33 Grant consisting of cash
35 Square one showing firmness of character

Solution to Salamanca 119



Canute (or Cnut) commanded the waters to go back: watery parts of across answers are reversed. 33: — sera must be perfect example of result, e.g. King surrounded by sea!

Prizewinners to Salamanca 119

R. Barnard (Penn, Bucks.)
M. A. L. Willey (Headingly, Leeds)
J. E. Green (Horsham, W. Sussex)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FIRST PERSON

Hippy hippy shake-up

Kate Pullinger

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a bunch of hippies who thought they needed a place to hang out: somewhere comfortable and right-on where they could read books, drink herbal tea, learn reflexology and buy brown rice, all at one go. They didn't know very much about business but they thought it would be nice to open up a wholefood shop with a bookshop and a café and an alternative health centre on the same premises — so they got it together and found a building in a hippyish part of London, applied for and received funding from a public body and set about 'creating a space'.

Being socialists, this group of hippies thought it would be great to run this 'space' collectively, so they formed a co-operative and arranged shop hours around the weekly collective meeting. The business trundled along and the shop became a well known centre.

Time went by and soon hippies were no longer the socialist norm and the co-op became women-only, the men for the most part leaving agreeably. The women worked hard, learning as they went — although by this time, the early 1980s, market forces were beginning to take control and the bookshop and café had to be closed down.

One day, the public body that had previously given the co-operative a helping hand from time to time was abolished and the building that housed the heroines of this story was sold to an evil property developer. The march of the antique dealers was on and the property developer doubled the rent and halved the amount of space available to the co-operators. Still, they struggled on, trying to find ways of cashing in on the up-market trend. But what had begun as a mid-1970s project, largely dependent upon personal politics and attitudes, found itself floundering in a 1980s world of market forces and cut-throat business tactics. For the ex-hippies the world was no longer a benevolent place full of muesli and regular customers. The co-op hit hard times.

There is no moral to this story. Creating a decent environment in which to work while trying to avoid hierarchy, work collectively and compete efficiently is a task of gargantuan proportions. All small businesses have to struggle like never before to keep a toe-hold on the high street. Mrs Thatcher's promises to help the greengrocer she loves so dearly as an emblem of British resolution are, like so many of her promises, empty.

I had my head stuck in a bin of muesli for several years. While the types of people who eat wholefoods have broadened and changed substantially — as more and more people are becoming, if not vegetarian, aware of dietary issues — the market has become increasingly competitive. Lefty bookshops, wholefood co-ops, distribution networks and other enthusiastic enterprises of the previous, oh-so-optimistic decade have all had to face the fact of competition from the big outlets. People can no longer afford to shop somewhere simply because it is right-on.

Banks do not like co-ops and women's co-ops are even less popular; we discovered, with bitter irony, that the Co-op Bank is possibly the least supportive of all. The only way for a small business to get an overdraft these days is for all its members to become personally liable for the debts incurred in case of bankruptcy, a possibility that is mooted with alarming regularity.

For a small business to survive, its members must be absolutely devoted to their project, trained in the appropriate business skills, willing to work long hours and take financial risks. An interest in wholefood and working co-operatively is no longer enough and 'collective responsibility' can not be a euphemism for 'What? Who, me?' The ex-hippies at the women's wholefood co-op have got to understand marketing, the fine art of promotion, how to cut out competition, the intricacies of the VAT system, how to read retail trends, how to cope with the rapidly rising price of nuts, and a whole plethora of suspiciously capitalist-sounding principles and tactics in order to make a go of it in these horribly unco-operative times. In 1987, good karma is not what business demands. □

Weekend competition

No 2973 **Set by Margaret Rogers**

Could we please have a verse lament either from an opinion pollster or an opinion pollee? Max. 12 lines by 13 May.

No 2970 **Set by Gray Dorn**

What Reagan *really* said to Kinnock and Healey on their recent visit.

Report **By Babe Bio**

You creese me up, you reely do: you sneer at old Ronnie for being all gaga when I dont suppose theirs many of *you* is going to see 20 agane. Still, another lot of well wicked entries — including one from a David Ransome-Gaffney who'd better not be a psudonim (or else, ho-ho, he's going to have some trubble cashing his check). A tenner to him and everyone below.

You know, you fellers shouldn't just wander in here. We have a special visitors' programme that — what? Oh, sure. Just kidding. Say, have you seen one of these little dingbats? You just press the button and the TV set comes on, then, depending on which one of these, uh, these numbered things you press, you can switch channels. See? Cute as hell. Japs make 'em, you know. Gosh, they're mean fighters but they're clever little sonsabitches.

Oh, right. Now see here, gentlemen. You may think you can get into bed with the Russians, but — hey! Will you look at that? He's still chasing that damn roadrunner. Thinks he'll catchum, but it'll never happen. And do you know the really wonderful thing? It's always that coyote's own, you know, his own, er, schemes that kinda fall right back on him. And I believe there's a lesson in that, my fellow-Americans. Those Soviets are building spaceships and death-rays, but they'll find that when we get our anti-gravity shield into position — say, you're from England, aren't you? Do they really drive on the left there?

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Reagan: Well, hi there. It's always good to see the British Ambassador; and I'm sure glad that you brought Junior with you. But, my word! Hasn't he started to lose his hair at an early age!

Healey: Mr President . . .

Reagan: I know. Junior wants to see the President's office. All the kids do. Follow me . . . here we are. Umm, the President doesn't appear to be in.

Healey: Mr President, *you* are the President.

Reagan: Shucks. Of course I am. Now, Junior, have a Coke and take a look at my collection of baseball cards. I had 4,576 at the last count. Or was it 5,476? I think I better get Schultzy to check.

Healey: Mr President, we've come to talk about nuclear weapons.

Reagan: Not in front of Junior, Mr Ambassador. You'll give him nightmares. Finished your Coke, son. Good. Now, when you get back to England, you can tell all your friends that you met the President of the United States of America and that he treated you just like a grown-up. Oh look, Mr Ambassador, he's completely overcome.

MARK AMBROSE

Opposition, eh? I know, you're that Welshman, aren't you? Heading the rebels in those cute little Welsh hills. Well, you'll need a whole bunch o' troops and training, I guess. Now, let me see, what've we got lying around you can take . . . Wait a minute, they are Marxists, this, er, Thatcher government, aren't they? Marxists dictators, and all that? Just dictators. Well, you'll need a heap o' bombs and stuff, anyway. Hell, I know it's difficult in the hills Mr Mckintosh, and Scotland is a big place . . . but, I don't know whether we can afford any more aid. Unless you're going to win. I mean, I got into a whole pile o' trouble over that last jalopy. Mmmm, Wales . . . isn't that near Libya? Can't you oppose that Gaddafi man instead? Hell, we do want our money's worth . . .

DAVID RANSOME-GAFFNEY

Reagan: Well, hello, Denis; say, you look in great shape. If a man isn't fit to run, he isn't fit to run, and if he can't run, he better not hide. You ever hear that one? No? Heck, there's plenty more you can use; I have boys thinking this stuff up every afternoon. No, wait, let me think, I got it. 'There's some folks say I couldn't run this country. Hell, Carter couldn't even run a half-marathon.' Where's Margaret, anyway? Hey, son — er — hey, they change the faces here quicker than substitutes at a basketball game — this is my new Chief of Staff. Son, Denis needs a whatchemejigger — no, no, let me remember. Tipple. And they say I can't remember what year it is. Gin and tonic-water, right? Where in tarnation is Margaret?

Healey: Ho ho. Some little error, Mr President. This is the *next* Prime Minister, and . . .

Reagan: Well, that's a relief, Denis. I kinda wondered why Margaret's hairline was receding. So then, son, you're the Doctor that Margaret and I were talking about last time she and Denis were over. Hey, I betcha she sent a message with you? What's the beef? Trouble in the colonies again? What's she say? And, hey, first names here.

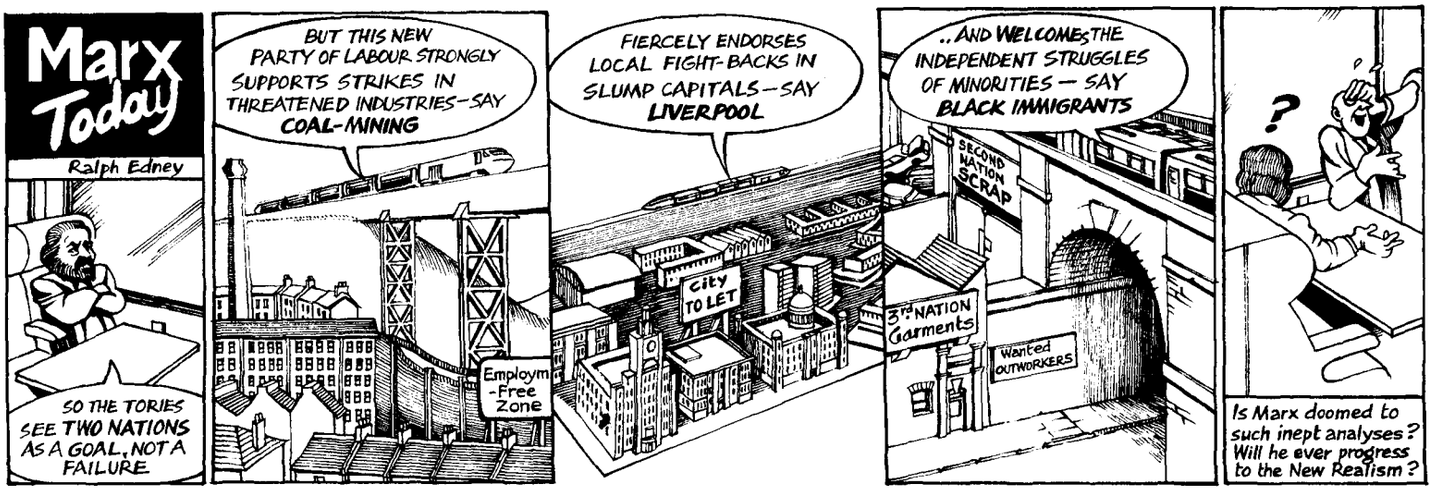
Kinnock: Neil, Mr President.

Reagan: So soon? Well, always ready for a little prayer, yes sir. For those in peril in outer space? Only joking!

WILL BELLENGER

Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Typesetting by Tocatta Graphics, Tabard House, London SE1
Printed by QB Ltd, Sheepen Place, Colchester CO3 3LJ (Tel. 577881), a member company of BPCC Printing Corporation plc.
Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd at Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8BA.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


Marx Today
Ralph Edney
SO THE TORIES SEE TWO NATIONS AS A GOAL, NOT A FAILURE
BUT THIS NEW PARTY OF LABOUR STRONGLY SUPPORTS STRIKES IN THREATENED INDUSTRIES—SAY COAL-MINING
Employm -Free Zone
FIERCELY ENDORSES LOCAL FIGHT-BACKS IN SLUMP CAPITALS—SAY LIVERPOOL
City TO LET
..AND WELCOMES THE INDEPENDENT STRUGGLES OF MINORITIES — SAY BLACK IMMIGRANTS
SECOND NATION SCRAP
3rd NATION Garments
Wanted OUTWORKERS
?
Is Marx doomed to such inept analyses? Will he ever progress to the New Realism?

Chess

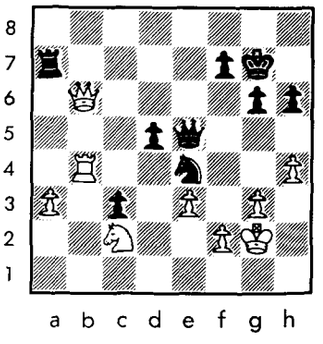
A FEATURE of the early rounds in the SWIFT International in Brussels has been the continued rejuvenation of Viktor Korchnoi. Turned 56 this March, Korchnoi is recovering the sort of form he was feared to have lost for good after his defeat by Kasparov in the candidates' semi-finals in 1983. A win against van der Wiel set him off to a good start in Brussels. But it was rather a puzzling game as the players were following a famous precedent that was supposed to be good for White. The question is: did Korchnoi play better than Boleslavsky, or van der Wiel worse than Botvinnik?

van der Wiel-Korchnoi, Rd.1, 10 April. French Defence.
1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 c5 4. exd5 exd5 5. Ngf3 Nc6 6. Bb5 Bd6 7. dxc5 Bxc5 8. 0-0 Nge7 9. Nb3 Bb6 9 . . . Bd6, to avoid exchange of black-squared Bishops, has been more popular. **10. Be3 Bxe3 11. Bxc6+ bxc6 12. fxe3 0-0** Botvinnik claimed that one could see 'even without analysis' that this position favoured White, because Black was weak on the dark squares. **13. Qd2 Qb6 14. Qc3 Rb8 15. Nfd4?** In Botvinnik-Boleslavksy, Absolute USSR Ch. 1941, White made sure that he would be able to occupy c5 by playing 15. Rab1! Re8 16. Rfe1 Ng6 17. Nc5 Bg4 18. Nd4 and went on to win the game. It looks to me as if, after almost half a century, the Dutch GM simply plays more weakly than Botvinnik. **Ba6 16. Nf5 Nxf5 17. Rxf5 Bc4!** Korchnoi screens his weaknesses and takes over the initiative. **18. Rf3 Rfe8 19. Rg3 g6 20. Rd1 c5 21. Rh3 a5! 22. Qe1 a4. 23. Nd2 Bxa2 24. Qh4 h5 25. Qxa4 Qxb2 26. Rf1 Re7 27. Qf4 Rbe8 28. Nf3 Bc4 29. Re1 Qc3 30. e4** Loses quickly, but in any case the pawns on c2 and e3 could not not be held. **Rxe4 31. Rxe4 Qa1+ 32. Kf2 Rxe4 33. Qd6 Qf1+ 34. Kg3 Rg4 mate 0-1.**

Meanwhile, Nigel Short was having a wretched time, losing five games in a row. It isn't easy being the Great Western Hope. Nobody knows better than Jan Timman. A few years ago he climbed up to the world's 3rd highest rating spot and set the Dutch journalists babbling about *their* re-incarnation of Fischer. Jan's career immediately took a nose-dive. It has levelled off now that everyone recognises that he is 'just' a very strong GM. The game in which he halted Korchnoi's progress is going to be one of the SWIFT tournament's contributions to opening theory:

Timman-Korchnoi, Rd.5, 15 April. French Defence.
1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e5 Nfd7 5. f4 c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. Be3 Qb6 8. Na4 Qa5+ 9. c3 cxd4 As 10. Nxd4 Nxd4 11. Bxd4 b5 is clearly unacceptable for White he has to give Black the chance for a sacrifice that looks promising. **10. b4 Nxb4 11. cxb4 Bxb4+ 12. Bd2 Bxd2+ 13. Nxd2 b6** Black has 3 Pawns for the piece and that's often enough. But Timman knows a lot about this position from two games he played against Yusupov last year in which he tried 14. Qc2 and 14. Qb3. **14. Bd3! Ba6 15. Nb2 Bxd3 16. Nxd3 Nc5 17. Nf2** White needs to preserve this piece for an attack on the K-side. **Na4 18. 0-0 Nc3 19. Qg4 0-0 20. Nf3 Rac8 21. Qh4 Qa4 22. Ng4 Ne2+ 23. Kh1 Qc2 24. Rae1 d3 25. Rd1!** This holds up Black's central action while the attack with Q + Ns on the Black K is decisive. Note that . . . Nxf4 can always be met by Nh6+. **h6 26. Nxh6+! gxh6 27. Qxh6 f6 28. exf6 Rc7 29. Ne5 Rh7** Rather more spirited, though not really any better, would have been 29 . . . Ng3+ 30. hxg3 Rh7 31. f7+ Rfxf7 32. Nxf7 etc. **30. Qg6+ 1-0.** After 30 . . . Kh8 31. f7 there is no defence against 32. Qf6+ with Ng6+ to follow.

While the other GMs struggled against each other, Kasparov seemed to be playing a different, easier game. He always held the initiative, was never on the defensive. With excellent, solid play Winants (*White*), one of the Belgians marked out for slaughter, kept him at bay for a long time. But in the diagram he has dropped his guard by decentralising his Queen and Kasparov (*Black*) strikes. Can you guess where the White King will be in 13 moves' time?



42 . . . Qf5! 43. f3 Ng5! 44. hxg5 Qxc2+ 45. Kg1 Qd1+ 46. Kg2 Qe2+ 47. Kh3 Qxf3! 48. Qxa7 48. gxh6+ Kh7 does not help as White is faced with mate by Qh1-h5-f5. **Qh1+ 49. Kg4 h5+ 50. Kf4 Qf1+ 51. Ke5 Qf5+ 52. Kd6 Qe6+ 53. Kc7 Qe7+ 54. Kb6 Qxa7+ 55. Kxa7 c2! 0-1.**
Solution from 24 April. **1. Bxg6! hxg6 2. Rxf6!** and **1-0** in **Portisch-Reshevsky, Petropolis 1973** because of 2 . . . exf6 3. Qh8+ Kf7 4. Rh7+ Nxh7 5. Qxh7+ Kf8 6. Bh6 mate.

George Botterill

New Statesman, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8BA
Tel: 01-739 3211 (Editorial & Administration)
Telex: 28449/Cables: Newstat, London E2
© 1987 Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd & contributors
Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd
Distributed by NS Distribution

Editor: John Lloyd; **Books and Arts Editor:** Harriett Gilbert; **Writers:** Sarah Benton, Duncan Campbell, Jane Dibblin, Rob Edwards (Scotland), Patrick Forbes, Peter Kellner (Political Editor), Andrew Lumsden (Associate Editor), John Rentoul; **Deputy Books & Arts Editor:** Malcolm Imrie; **Poetry Editor:** Hugo Williams; **Production Manager:** Joanne Hurst; **Art Editor:** Vicky Hutchings; **Editorial Assistant:** Jane Thomas

Subscriptions: Cecilia Milton, Joan Scanlon (01-739 1737); **Display advertisements:** Laura Berryman, David Jones (01-739 1645); **Classified advertisements:** Janet Banks (01-739 1645)

Subscription rates: UK & Eire £40; Europe (air mail only £46); rest of world: air speeded £51; air mail £61. USA: air speeded $70; air mail $85. Canada: air speeded Can $90; air mail Can $115.

Second class postage paid at New York, NY USPS 382260. Air freight in US by Speedimpex USA Inc. (US Postmaster: Address changes should be sent to New Statesman, Speedimpex USA Inc., 45-45 39th Street, Long Island City, NY 11104)

Unsolicited manuscripts and artwork will only be returned if an SAE is enclosed.

This England

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. (Postcards please.)

☐ The latest survey shows that cats are tending to appeal to a younger age group in the prosperous South rather than the declining North. Cats, after all, are natural yuppies — lithe (if not young), upwardly mobile and unashamedly selfish. — *Daily Telepgraph* (Gregory Tesser)

☐ A *Sunday Post* man overhead some infants in a primary school playground bringing a new slant to an old story. There was a sea of serious faces as the wee one recited — 'And Daddy Bear said, "Someone's eaten all my porridge too — and pinched the video recorder"' — *Sunday Post* (George Moor)

☐ Three men caught red-handed at 2am with balaclavas, jemmies, walkie-talkies, torches, gloves and binoculars claimed they were out rabbiting, Bristol Crown Court heard. — *Bristol Observer* (Liselotte Leschke)

☐ Furious London Underground managers and commuters are calling on Brent Council to ban graffiti classes planned at a youth club near a tube train depot which is plagued by vandalism. The council-funded classes for 11-16-year-olds, include lessons in wall-painting and how to use an aerosol can effectively. They are being advertised at St Raphael's community centre, a short walk from the huge Neasden depot and the underground's Metropolitan line, both prime targets for graffiti artists. — *Sunday Times* (Amanda Welles)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW STATESMAN LECTURES

at St James's Church, Piccadilly

FREEDOM AND EQUALITY

11 May Rt Hon. Roy Hattersley MP:
'How do governments protect freedom?'

18 May Professor Paul Hirst,
Birkbeck College:
'Why do we want equality?'

1 June Ben Pimlott,
Birkbeck College:
'Can socialism bring freedom?'

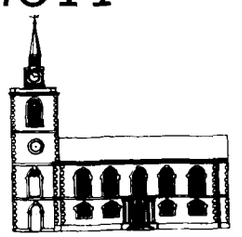
8 June Professor Raymond Plant,
Southampton University:
'Can capitalism bring equality?'

15 June Baroness Tessa Blackstone,
Policy Studies Institute:
'Education and equality'

29 June Professor Bernard Crick:
'Class and freedom'

All lectures start at 1.05 p.m. in St James's Church,
197 Piccadilly, London W1 Tel. 01-734 4511

Admission free



St James's Church 197 Piccadilly, London W1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED